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THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACH
TO THE STUDY OF RELIGION

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ABSTRACT

Since the last war there has been a renewed interest among anthropologists in the study of religion. To date, however, there has not been any comparative analysis and evaluation of these recent developments in religious anthropology. The purpose of this thesis is an investigation into contemporary anthropological approaches to the study of religion. Six significant contemporary anthropologists of religion, representing social, cultural, and structural anthropology, have been singled out for analysis. Their approaches are contrasted with each other as well as examined in relation to the traditional anthropological approaches to religion. The final section of the thesis contains a general criticism of these various approaches and offers suggestions for the development of religious anthropology.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is an analysis and evaluation of the anthropological approach to the study of religion. A history of all that has been written on the anthropology of religion since the differentiation of anthropology from the other social sciences during the nineteenth century until the present time would be neither a mammoth task nor an altogether instructive one. Initially plagued by polemics and misinterpretation and later by a lack of interest, it has only been during the past twenty years that anthropologists have renewed their interest in religion. We need therefore to establish some sort of criteria for selecting that which is worthy of consideration from the general literature on the subject.

I shall assume here that it will not be necessary to know thoroughly all that has been written on religious anthropology. Ezra Pound in his ABC of Reading maintains that literature has been created by the following classes of persons: the inventors, those who found a new process; the masters, those who developed a new process or several such processes and employed them as well or perhaps even

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better than the inventors; the diluters, those who came after and did not do the job quite as well. His classification system could be applied equally as well to anthropology. I would only add a final category: one's contemporaries, those who have contributed consistently to one's field of interest during the past ten or fifteen years. I maintain that it is the responsibility of the anthropologist devoted to the study of religion, as well as anybody who takes his interests seriously, to have a thorough understanding of his inventors, his masters, and his contemporaries. This then will be the basis for selecting from the various anthropological approaches those which will be considered in this thesis.

It remains then to establish which anthropologists who have written on the subject of religion were the inventors and who were the masters. If one were to search for the sources of contemporary anthropological approaches to the study of religion, one would come up with three names: Edward Tylor, Robertson Smith, and Sigmund Freud. These three scientists I consider to be the inventors. I include Tylor because his definition of religion proposed nearly a century ago still stands. Indeed it is enjoying presently somewhat of a popular revival, for no less than

three significant contemporary anthropologists have within the past decade urged a return to Tylor's original definition of religion.¹ I include Robertson Smith for his discovery of a sociological approach to the study of religion in his book, The Religion of the Semites (1889). Sigmund Freud, of course, was not an anthropologist by trade, but because many contemporary cultural anthropologists base their analyses of religion upon Freudian psychoanalytic theory, it would be impossible to neglect him here.

Three other anthropologists, Fustel de Coulanges, Henri Bergson, and Lucien Levy-Bruhl, have claim to be considered inventors. Fustel de Coulanges and Robertson Smith both discovered the sociological approach to religion; however, there was a major difference between the anthropology of Fustel de Coulanges and that of his contemporary, Robertson Smith. For the former in his study of religious insti-

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1. Goody, J., "Religion and Ritual: the Definitional Problem". British Journal of Sociology. XII.2.
 - Horton, R., "A Definition of Religion, and its Uses". Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute. XC.
 - Spiro, M., "Religion: Problems of Definition and Explanation". Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion: ASA. 3.

tutions of ancient Greece and Rome (La Cité Antique, 1864), an understanding of religion came prior to an understanding of society whereas for the latter, in his study of religious institutions of the Semitic tribes of ancient Arabia, an understanding of society came prior to an understanding of religion. It was this latter emphasis which, via Emile Durkheim and Radcliffe-Brown, came to dominate the anthropological tradition, and for this reason I prefer to consider Robertson Smith the more important of the two inventors of the sociological approach.

Henri Bergson in his classic, Les Deux Sources de la morale et de la religion (1932), distinguished between two kinds of religion: static religion and dynamic religion; and two corresponding kinds of society: closed society and open society. According to Bergson man is basically a social animal endowed with intelligence. But human intelligence in its more divisive aspects poses a threat to social cohesion. To counteract this potential threat to the social order, Bergson proposed that a second faculty developed within the human mind. This second faculty Bergson called the 'myth-making faculty', and with this faculty man constructed belief systems about gods, ghosts,

ancestors, etc., or what Bergson called static religion. The myth-making capacity of the mind was the basis for social cohesion and the closed society. But Bergson spoke of another kind of religion. This second type, which he called dynamic religion, is mystical and oriented towards humanity in general rather than toward the narrow constrictions of the closed society. Bergson saw this second type of religion as the creative impulse made manifest as life. Dynamic religion corresponds to static religion as life energy corresponds to matter. All moral and spiritual progress is a result of the infusion of the former into the latter. Bergson's unique contribution to the study of religion was that religion, defined in terms of the myth-making faculty and the creative impulse, becomes an instinct, a natural function of the human mind.

Whereas most anthropologists investigated social behavior and social institutions, Lévy-Bruhl focused his attention upon thought processes. He proposed that particular modes of thought corresponded to particular types of societies. The two major modes of thought which he considered were primitive thought and civilized thought (La Mentalité primitive, 1922). For Lévy-Bruhl the primitive mentality is prelogical in the sense that it is indifferent to contradiction and mystical in the sense that primitive

man participates in an environment inhabited by supernatural beings as well as human beings. For primitive man perception of supernatural beings is as epistemologically valid as the perception of human beings. Civilized mentality, on the other hand, is logically oriented and based upon the objective perception of cause and effect. Knowledge is based upon empirical evidence. If faced with an experience which is unexplainable, civilized man assumes that this is so because his knowledge of objective natural processes is inadequate. What Western Europeans noticed as peculiarities of primitive thought was due to different modes of perception, different modes of thought, and different principles of integrating experience, and not due to an inferior mental capacity as Tylor, Frazer, and the other evolutionists contended.

These contributions of Henri Bergson and Lucien Lévy-Bruhl failed to penetrate into the mainstream of anthropology during the 1930's. Bergson was thought to be more of a social philosopher than a social scientist, and his unique theory that religion is a natural function of the human mind was never seriously considered by anthropologists.

Lévy-Bruhl's contribution was widely attacked as well as misunderstood by social anthropologists, and his theory never really influenced the anthropological tradition. For this reason then, namely minimal influence upon the tradition, I will not consider the three Frenchmen, Fustel de Coulanges, Henri Bergson, and Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, in this thesis.

Who then are the masters? Only two anthropologists really stand above the rest: Emile Durkheim and A.R. Radcliffe-Brown. Durkheim developed the path originally established by Robertson Smith and Fustel de Coulanges, and Radcliffe-Brown, who was influenced by all three of these men, went on to establish what has become the dominant tradition in the social anthropological approach to the study of religion.

Two other anthropologists, however, need mentioning:

James Frazer and Bronislaw Malinowski. Frazer took up a lesser thesis of Robertson Smith, viz., the evolutionary approach to magic, religion, and science, and added an original but unenlightening classification of magic.

Malinowski's approach to religion was psychological, pragmatic, and individual oriented. For Malinowski magic and religion functioned as safety valves or crutches in order

to help men overcome situations of emotional strain. This approach owed a great deal to Frazer and Marett and cannot be considered a very original theory. Second, Malinowski's approach, which for the lack of a better name could be called the crutch theory of religion, is nonsense for anyone familiar with the lives and works of John Bunyan, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, or Lev Tolstoy. As William James clearly showed in The Varieties of Religious Experience (1902) religion is as much a creator of emotional stress as it is a resolver of emotional stress. Third, Malinowski's approach, with its emphasis upon what functions magic and religion perform rather than how these functions are performed, does not offer much insight into the nature of either magic or religion. I would consider, then, both Frazer and Malinowski to be diluters and not worthy of further analysis here.

Social anthropologists of the 1930's and 1940's who wrote on religion include Meyer Fortes, Raymond Firth, E.E. Evans-Pritchard, M.N. Srinivas, and Daryll Forde. Although some of their work has been written in more recent times, their intellectual development occurred during the 1930's and 1940's, and for the most part they have all followed well within the traditions

established by the inventors and masters.

Cultural anthropologists of this time who wrote on religion include Paul Radin, Edward Sapir, Robert Lowie, Ralph Linton, Clyde Kluckhohn, A. Irving Hallowell, and Ruth Benedict. Their mentor, Franz Boas, was a master of ethnography, but his importance for the development of the theory of religion was minimal. For the most part I see the work of these cultural anthropologists as a result of the infusion of Gestalt psychology and psycho-analytic theory into the mainstream of American ethnography. Taken singly each of these anthropologists does not seem important enough to merit inclusion in this thesis. Yet the diversity of their approaches makes an overall treatment of the cultural anthropological approach to religion during the 1930's and 1940's almost impossible. Hallowell will be taken up in the final section of the thesis. A major contemporary cultural anthropologist will be included in the central section of the thesis. Freud's influence will be discussed in the next chapter. Because of limitations of space we must content ourselves with this limited treatment of cultural anthropology.

It remains then to select the contemporary anthropologists

to be included in this thesis. The contemporaries are numerous and include Godfrey Lienhardt, Clifford Geertz, V.W. Turner, Melford Spiro, Robin Horton, Jack Goody, Mary Douglas, Claude Levi-Strauss, John Middleton, Edmund Leach, and Peter Worsley. All of these anthropologists have written articles and books on subjects which come within the scope of religious anthropology. Since this thesis is on the anthropological approach to religion, I will exclude those contemporaries whose contributions to the approach have been minimal. Thus for the purposes of this thesis Robin Horton who has written numerous articles on methodology is more important than John Middleton who has been concerned with employing a particular methodology with reference to certain tribes of East Africa. The following anthropologists I have selected for analysis and evaluation because they are either developing a new approach or contributing to the development of an approach already existent in the tradition: E. R. Leach, Robin Horton, Melford Spiro, V.W. Turner, and Claude Levi-Strauss. One other anthropologist, S.F. Nadel, I have included because his approach, although not new in any sense of the word, still carries some measure of acceptance in anthropological circles today.

Mary Douglas and Clifford Geertz also deserve to be included here, but after some thought I realized that they have not, to date, written enough on their approach to permit a very systematic analysis. The contributions of Mary Douglas will be mentioned, however, in the final section of the thesis. Thus although there are some lamentable absences on my list, the six contemporaries that I have chosen do represent a fairly accurate cross-section of religious anthropology. Structural anthropology is represented by Claude Levi-Strauss and cultural anthropology by Melford Spiro. From social anthropology there is Edmund Leach and Robin Horton. There is also S.F. Nadel and V.W. Turner who fit in with the social anthropological tradition but various aspects of their method extend beyond or have relevance outside that tradition.

The most recent analysis and evaluation of the anthropological approach to religion was E.E. Evans-Pritchard's Theories of Primitive Religion (1965). Although published only four years ago, the book does not really cover the developments in religious anthropology of the last twenty years. Since there has not been any comparative analysis and evaluation of the developments in religious anthropology over the past twenty years, I have decided to devote the

major part of this thesis to contemporary contributions to religious anthropology. The first section of the thesis will contain an analysis of the inventors and masters. The purpose of this section is simply to delineate the dominant traditions in religious anthropology in order to understand with some depth the bases of contemporary anthropological approaches to religion. The second, and major, section will contain the contemporaries. The third section will contain various suggestions for the development of the anthropological approach to the study of religion based upon the prior analyses of the contemporaries as well as the contributions of various theologians, psychologists, philosophers, and linguists.

PART I
THE TRADITIONS
OF RELIGIOUS ANTHROPOLOGY

1. THE INVENTORS

Let us begin with Edward Tylor. Tylor would be significant if for no other reason than he was one of the first anthropologists to take religion seriously. Other intellectuals of his time on the side of Christian faith dismissed primitive religion as heathenism whereas intellectuals on the side of reason were apt to dismiss primitive religion for its supposed irrationality. Tylor instead took a scientific interest in the religion of primitive peoples. Like many of his evolutionist oriented contemporaries Tylor attempted to explain the origins and development of religion. Assuming that complex forms emerge out of simpler ones, Tylor proposed a unilineal path of evolution with Western European civilization circa nineteenth century as the complex and primitive tribes of the non-Western world as representative of the simpler forms. Tylor assumed that the state of civilization in Africa, Asia, and Latin America during the last century was genetically and logically prior to the state of nineteenth century Western European civilization. Thus in order to discover the origins of religion Tylor investigated the religions of primitive

peoples living in the nineteenth century.

According to Tylor the concept of the soul originated with man's attempt to interpret and understand his dream and hallucinatory and other psychic experiences. From this idea of the soul as an entity distinct from the body and detachable from the body during sleep and trance states, there developed the belief in the existence of spirit beings. Thus, for Tylor, religion emerged out of man's attempt to understand his experience. As a minimum definition of religion Tylor proposed "the belief in spiritual beings", or what he called animism (1873, p.424). Spiritual beings could be made manifest in humans as well as plants and non-human beings. According to Tylor animism was the most primitive form of religion, and from this simple belief in spiritual beings did all the higher forms of religion, such as ghost-beliefs, immortality of the soul, sacrifice, gods, and monotheism, eventually develop.

Tylor's theory of the origins and development of religion was intellectualistic. He saw primitive man as a home-spun philosopher attempting to interpret his existence purposively. From successive attempts at thinking through human experience more differentiated and complex systems

of religious beliefs evolved. There was no affective element in Tylor's approach. He of course acknowledged that ritual practices were a part of religion, but for Tylor religion was primarily a system of beliefs with reference to a particular class of supermundane beings. Because of the evolutionist framework to his theory, the lack of an affective element in his approach, and the exclusion of any reference to social structure, cultural patterns, or personality types, much of Tylor's approach to the study of religion was discarded by later anthropologists. Even though his approach has been superseded, his definition of religion has survived to this day. Several contemporary anthropologists go so far as to proclaim the existence of a neo-Tylorian school. The two most notable proponents of neo-Tylorianism, Melford Spiro and Robin Horton, although from radically different anthropological traditions, both derive their approaches from Tylor's definition of religion and from his underlying view that religion explains experience.

Tylor saw religion as arising from the individual's need for understanding; Robertson Smith saw religion as arising from the nature of people living together. In Religion of

the Semites Robertson Smith wrote:

Religion is not an arbitrary relation of the individual man to a supernatural power; it is a relation of all the members of a community to the power that has the good of the community at heart. (p.55)

For Robertson Smith religion could not be divorced from ethics, or the values of the community. Unlike Tylor who focused mainly upon magic and curious religious beliefs, Robertson Smith dismissed magic as an earlier form discarded along the road of evolution and instead investigated social life.

To lend support to his thesis he travelled to Syria to do fieldwork on the Semitic tribes of ancient Arabia. Contemporary anthropologists, however, do not grant much credence to his ethnography. The difficulties, of course, are obvious. But the value of Robertson Smith lies with his approach rather than with the information he gathered on a social system that ceased to exist thousands of years ago. According to him the Semitic tribes of ancient Arabia were organized into matrilineal clans, and each clan possessed a totem which was sacred to the members of that clan. Clansmen conceived themselves and their totem to be of the same blood. They believed the totem to be the god

of the clan as well as literally and figuratively the father of the clan. So much for Robertson Smith's ethnography. His interpretation of the totemic system established the sociological approach. According to Robertson Smith the god of the clan was none other than the clan itself concretized and externalized. This projection of the clan as god was symbolized in the totemic creature which was worshipped in communion. At communion the totemic animal was sacrificed. Since clan members and the totemic creature were of the same blood, the slaying and subsequent eating of the totemic creature symbolized the renewal and unity of the clan.

Thus for Robertson Smith religion had its origins in ritual and the community. Among primitive peoples:

Religion was made up of a series of acts and observances, the correct performance of which was necessary or desirable to secure the favour of the gods or to avert their anger, and in their observances every member of society had a share marked out for him either in virtue of being born within the family and community or in virtue of the station within the family and community that he had come to hold...Religion did not exist for the saving of souls but for the preservation and welfare of society.
(p. 29-30)

Unlike Tylor who defined religion with reference to beliefs in a particular class of beings, Robertson Smith defined

religion with reference to the believing community.

One reason for Robertson Smith's importance is that he influenced three other major social scientists: James Frazer, Sigmund Freud, and Emile Durkheim. Frazer took Robertson Smith's lesser thesis concerning the evolutionary development of magic, religion, and science. As has been shown by Mary Douglas this distinction between magical and religious rites is a gross misinterpretation of the real nature of both magic and religion (Mary Douglas, 1966, p. 7-28). Freud in his book Totem and Taboo (1913) drew extensively from Robertson Smith's theory of totemism and sacrifice. Finally Durkheim took almost in whole Robertson Smith's definition as well as approach to the study of religion.

It is necessary to be very careful in analyzing the Freudian approach to religion. Among social anthropologists it seems the usual practice to avoid coming to grips with the Freudian approach by ridiculing a few of Freud's ideas then dismissing all of Freud. Rather than throwing out the baby with the bath water, many cultural anthropologists completely accept psychoanalytic theory without questioning the limitations of this approach. For Freud's

outlook was limited in many ways. He was the product of his own cultural, historical, and religious background. Furthermore he was a psychologist at a time when psychology was just getting started. Just as anthropology at that time lacked a substantial body of ethnographical studies so psychology lacked an adequate number of case studies, and both scientific disciplines were struggling to develop an instructive and coherent theoretical basis. Therefore to dismiss Freud's psychoanalytic theory, as some anthropologists have done (E.E. Evans-Pritchard, 1965, p.41-43), because of the preposterousness of the myth of the slaying of the primal father would be as unscientific as dismissing Robertson Smith's sociologism because of his suspect ethnography.

What then is the Freudian approach to the study of religion? Like the other two inventors, Freud was an evolutionist, but with a difference. Applying the biological theory that phylogeny recapitulates ontogeny to anthropology and psychology, Freud corresponded the different historical stages of culture with the different stages in the development of the human personality. According to the evolutionists culture passed through three successive stages: magic,

religion, and science. Freud corresponded these three stages with childhood, adolescence, and maturity. Magic and childhood ~~were~~ stages of wish-fulfillment; adolescence and religion ~~were~~ stages of object-finding; and maturity and science are stages of rationality.

Let us concentrate on Freud's theory of religion, for magic and science do not directly concern this thesis. For Freud the basis of religion was a sense of guilt. Freud proposed that a very long time ago during the primal state of human society men lived in hordes. In the horde one man, the father, controlled all the women and kept their sexual services for himself. The father's domination over the women provoked the hatred of his sons, but because of his power and authority the sons also respected their father. Thus the emotional response of the sons to their father was ambivalent. For some particular reason, which was of no concern to Freud, the sons in their hatred slayed their father thereby gaining access to the women. But later out of their respect and love for their father they felt a sense of guilt. This guilt caused them to identify a totem as a substitute for their father, and they made it a crime to slay the totemic creature. On

special occasions the brothers commemorated the parricide by sacrificing the totemic creature. Furthermore they made it a crime to marry the women whom they now controlled. Thus murder and incest became the two most heinous crimes of primitive society. For Freud the origin of religion is to be found in totemism, and the origin of culture is to be found in the incest taboo. In the words of Freud:

Society is now based on the complicity in the common crime, religion on the sense of guilt and consequent remorse, while morality is based partly on the necessities of society and partly on the expiation which this sense of guilt demands. (1938, p.919)

If Tylor's approach to the study of religion could be labelled intellectualistic and Robertson Smith's approach sociologistic, then Freud's approach is certainly emotionalistic. Religion is just so much of an attempt to deal with man's sense of guilt. By admitting that only feelings of guilt, submission, and dependence could be religious, Freud weakened his case. The whole spectrum of religious feeling discussed by Williams James in The Varieties of Religious Experience is narrowed down so radically that religion appears almost unrecognizable. Moreover in direct opposition to Tylor, Freud completely eliminated the importance of the cognitive function of religion. In this regard

Freud was close to Robertson Smith for both based their theories upon the affective element in religion. Freud was not concerned with faith but with institutions. He was more interested in nineteenth century Christian culture than the teachings of Jesus. In fact Freud not only wrote about Christian culture; he also attacked it. It must be remembered that for Freud personality development begins with the conflict between instinctual desires and a repressive culture. Religious culture, and especially Christian culture at the turn of the last century, Freud found particularly repressive. Religion is not just an attempt to deal with man's sense of guilt; it also sustains that sense of guilt. This is what Radcliffe-Brown understood and Malinowski did not in their argument concerning the relationship between anxiety and ritual. For Freud, science, and especially psychotherapy, is more suited than religion for curing 'sick souls', and, being the positivist that he was, Freud believed that eventually science based upon reason would replace religion as the basis of culture. Thus Freud, although a psychologist, was more anthropologically oriented than many realize, for he never really attempted to come to grips with the nature of religion as Jung did; rather he took for religion

only the culture in which religion operated.

There is one other aspect of Freudian psychoanalytic theory which needs mentioning. For Freud the conscience (superego) and instinctual desire (id) were irrational forces within the human psyche. Reason was located in the ego, and it was the function of the ego to control un-socializable ~~socializable~~ desires flowing from the id and to free itself as much as possible from the tyrannical constraints of social morality. Thus reason is the controlling or mediating agent of the psyche. It would be wrong, however, to infer from this that Freud thought man was by nature a rational animal. Plato, on the other hand, located the conscience within reason. Reason is the source of moral judgment. The ego and superego are one and the same. Man is by nature a rational animal. Social anthropology for the most part fits within the Platonic tradition. Freud and those cultural anthropologists who follow Freud do not fit within this tradition. For the social anthropologist within the Platonic tradition man chooses between various courses of action by rationally investigating the relative merits of each alternative. In the 'heat of the moment' one may make a poor choice, but the choice is

only considered to be a poor one because one's prior analysis of the merits of each alternative was faulty or inadequate. This basic assumption concerning the nature of man's decision-making faculty underlies, for example, the work of Fredrik Barth (Political Leadership among the Swat Pathans, 1959), Edmund Leach (Political Systems of Highland Burma, 1954), and many others. For cultural anthropologists within the Freudian tradition, however, a particular personality type, in order to sustain itself, must satisfy certain needs peculiar to its personality. A person may exercise faculties of rational choice in deciding how he will fulfill these needs, but this choice is irrelevant, for the personality needs have already been determined in childhood experience. In other words, a person does not become a communist because he has rationally analyzed the problems of capitalist society and believes communism to be the best solution to these problems; rather a person becomes a communist because, due to certain childhood experiences, his personality can only be sustained through radical activity. The content of his radical beliefs is unimportant. This hypothetical communist could just as well have become an anarchist, a Nazi, or a Bible-thumping faith-healing Southern Baptist minister. Thus Freud stood

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Plato on his head.

Like the other two inventors Freud is not remembered today for his positivistic optimism concerning the dawn of a rational age. Nor is he especially remembered for his ethnography of the primal horde. However, his theory that religion is a projective system whereby the conceptions of supernatural beings are the projections of the child's parental imagos has been taken up by many cultural anthropologists. Furthermore his notion of religion as a pre-scientific therapy for culturally constituted neuroses and his theory of the dynamics of the human psyche and the role of reason in decision-making have also found a home in America.

2. THE MASTERS

Let us now turn to the masters: Emile Durkheim and A.R. Radcliffe-Brown. Durkheim was greatly in debt to Robertson Smith for his approach to the study of religion. Robertson Smith's sociological interpretation of totemism, plus his contention that totemism was the most primitive form of religion, plus his definition of religion were taken almost without alteration by Durkheim. Durkheim's importance then is that he assimilated the theories of Robertson Smith as well as Fustel de Coulanges and others into an articulate coherent sociological approach. He was the first to do this. In this way then Durkheim's sociology provides a convenient division between nineteenth and twentieth century anthropology. Anthropology prior to Durkheim was more akin to social philosophy. The two dominant schools of social philosophy at that time were the positivists and the social contract theorists such as Hobbes and Locke. For Hobbes and Locke the collective life of society arose from the individual. The basis of society was the social contract formed in rational self-interest by its component members. Tylor, of course, was part of this intellectual tradition. For Tylor religion

originated out of man's attempt to understand his experience. Durkheim's theory of society and religion was radically different. For Durkheim, even though the individual is the ultimate bearer and transmitter of social life, society is the more fundamental of the two realities. Society transcends the individual in that it has a longer time-span and in that it is not dependent upon particular individuals while at the same time society is imminent in the individual for the individual personality is a product of society. From this point of view it is only a short leap to the assertion that god is society. Meaning and value according to Durkheim are derived from the collective representations of a people and therefore are social in origin. Religion is meaning and value objectified and externalized. God is society worshipping itself. Or in the words of Durkheim, religion is "a system of beliefs by means of which individuals represent the society of which they are members and the relationships, obscure but intimate, which they have with it". (1964, p. 323)

But religion also has an affective element. In all human beings according to Durkheim there exists a sentiment to come together to participate in the collective life.

This participation is the means by which the group periodically reaffirms itself and constitutes the sacred realm of social life. The experience of the sacred is the feeling which the experience of the collective life inspires in its members. In contradistinction to the life of the sacred Durkheim posited the existence of the profane. The profane life is the private, individual oriented life of the members of society. Religion then as defined by Durkheim is " a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden --- beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a church, all those who adhere to them" (1964, p.47).

So much for Durkheim's definition of religion; what then is his approach. Religion has its origins in society; therefore religion is a social fact. As a fact religion is external to the knowing subject and, therefore, is to be studied by scientific examination rather than by philosophic introspection. Since religion is a social fact, it can only be explained sociologically in terms of other social facts. It cannot be explained by non-social phenomena. Durkheim set about to demonstrate the

validity of his approach by investigating Australian totemism, which was in his opinion the most primitive form of religion. There is no need to go into the details of Durkheims analysis of Australian totemism here. In brief, the Australian aborigine, because of his membership in a particular clan, enters into a relationship with the totem of that clan. The totemic creature or plant which is worshipped is the object of numerous taboos. In other words, it is sacred, and it is considered sacred because of the divine impersonal force, or the totemic principle, in the totem. Thus the totem is both a symbol of god (or more specifically the totemic principle) as well as a symbol of the clan. Durkheim concluded that the religious force was the collective force of the clan symbolized by the totem.

Many of the ideas which Durkheim proposed in The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life have now lost their appeal. His assertion that Australian totemism was the most elementary form of religion is not acceptable today, but then again the intellectual search for origins is no longer as fervant as ~~it~~ ^{it} was then. His dichotomy between the sacred and the profane has been taken up by Mircea

Eliade and the death of God theologians in America (Mircea Eliade and the Dialectic of the Sacred, Thomas Altizer, 1963) and has been modified by Edmund Leach (1954, p.12-13), but as an anthropological tool it has not, on the whole, proved very useful. Several themes in The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life, however, have strongly influenced the anthropological tradition. First, his delineation of the links between religion and the social structure has become the foundation for the social anthropological approach to religion. Second, his treatment of religion as a symbolic statement of the social structure has strongly influenced the thinking of Leach, Levi-Strauss, and others. Third, his analysis of totemic classification systems and his attempt to discern the relationships between patterns of thought and the social structure helped pave the way for the emergence of structural anthropology.

There are, however, serious weaknesses to Durkheim's approach. He criticized Tylor's definition of religion because it was not universal. He cited Buddhism as an example of a religion which does not involve the belief in spiritual beings. But Durkheim's criticism of Tylor could be thrown back at himself. At the very basis of

Durkheim's approach lies the assumption that meaning and value are social in origin. But for some forms of Buddhism, such as Zen, meaning and value are certainly not social in origin. Thus Durkheim's definition lacks universality as well. Like Freud, he sells religion short. Because Freud took religious culture, rather than faith, for religion, the more unfathomable aspects of religion are unconvincingly dismissed as intellectual distortions or infantile sentiment. Because Durkheim took religion as something fundamentally social, he is forced to ignore religions of personal liberation such as Zen Buddhism, yoga, and Vedanta. Both the theories of Freud and Durkheim are based upon projection. For Freud God is father; for Durkheim God is society. Therefore religion is an illusion. But why must religion be considered an illusion for the underlying reality of personality development or society? And what happens when people realize that their religious convictions are based upon an illusion? Both Freud and Durkheim recognized the social function of religion, but as heirs of nineteenth century rationalism they envisaged the possibilities of a more rational future. However, Durkheim, more than Freud, expressed fear that reason could turn out a poorer substitute than religion for maintaining social solidarity.

The final criticism of Durkheim is that although he maintained only sociological explanations could explain religion, his theory is basically a psychological one. Indeed his approach derives extensively from social psychology and ~~cr~~^{cr} theory. Religion is a feeling. Religion originates in the sentiment among men to participate in the collective life. Religion like society inspires feelings of dependence upon the individual. Thus Durkheim's sociology is continually reduced to psychological assumptions. Few anthropologists, however, have taken up the thought that because Durkheim was unable to explain religion purely in terms of social facts then maybe both social as well as psychological facts are needed.

Radcliffe-Brown was the first anthropologist to turn away from the established concern for origins of religion. He also stayed clear of formulating a definition of religion. The closest he ever came to defining religion was in the Henry Myers Lecture of 1945 when he stated that "religion or any religious cult normally involves certain ideas or beliefs on the one hand, and on the other certain observances. These observances, positive and neg-

ative, i.e., actions and abstentions, I shall speak of as rites" (1952, 154-155). And further on "religion is everywhere an expression in one form or another of a sense of dependence or a power outside ourselves, a power which we may speak of as a spiritual or moral power" (p.157). Neither of these statements strikes one as being very accurate or original, but Radcliffe-Brown's importance lies more with the influence he exerted upon the future of anthropology than with any theoretical ingenuity. Although religion, for Radcliffe-Brown, consisted of beliefs and ritual, what was important for him was the study of religious action, and equating religious action with ritual, he asserted the primacy of ritual over belief:

What really happens is that the rites and the justifying or rationalizing beliefs develop together as parts of a coherent whole. But in this development it is action or the need of action that controls or determines belief rather than the other way about. The actions themselves are symbolic expressions of sentiments. (ibid., p.155)

What Radcliffe-Brown meant here by sentiment is rather puzzling. It may be sentiment in a Durkheimian sense, viz., the sentiment to come together to participate in the collective life, or it may just be the feeling of dependence which he mentioned earlier in the lecture.

Radcliffe-Brown did not seem to be aware of the possibility that a coherent belief and ritual system could emerge from experience which lies prior to both belief and ritual, such as trances or dreams. Nor did he make any attempt to prove his assertion of the primacy of ritual over belief by consulting the well-documented ethnographic records of several religions which were 'born' during the latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, such as the Ghost-Dance religion and the Cargo cults. Despite these weaknesses in Radcliffe-Brown's argument his contention that beliefs are a rationalization of ritual became standard social anthropological dogma for a number of years. In consequence the word ritual practically replaced the word religion in social anthropology. Analyses of a people's religious beliefs and the explanatory nature of these beliefs dropped from social anthropological studies. The dominant concern was the study of ritual action as a symbolic expression of "socially significant values".

From this point it is only a short distance to Radcliffe-Brown's second contribution to anthropology, the functional approach to the study of religion:

We may entertain as at least a pos-

sibility the theory that any religion is an important or even essential part of the social machinery, as are morality and law, part of the complex system by which human beings are enabled to live together in an orderly arrangement of social relations. From this point of view we deal not with the origins but with the social functions of religions, i.e., the contribution that they make to the formation and maintenance of a social order. (*ibid.*, p.154)

Religion was to be studied in so far as it contributed to the solidarity of society. The way to study religion, therefore, was through ritual action. Rituals functioned to promote the social order and to transmit down through the generations the charter of a people. If this argument seems circular, it is because it is. Religion is thus narrowed down to ritual and then ritual is narrowed down still further to its contribution to the formation and maintenance of the social order.

Several of the more naive aspects of Radcliffe-Brown's functionalism were modified and improved upon by other anthropologists. Particularly instructive was Robert Merton's criticism of the three basic assumptions underlying functional analyses (Social Theory and Social Structure, 1947). First, society may not be as integrated as the functionalists contend. The integration of a people

is, according to Merton, an empirical not a theoretical consideration. With respect to religion, in one social system there may be several competing religious systems, or the religious values may conflict with other values in the system such as the secular values of the state. Second, Merton criticized the assumption that all social behavioral patterns have a positive function. Third, Merton attacked what he called the postulate of indispensability. According to this assumption an institution is indispensable for the maintenance of society. Merton proposed, however, that what is indispensable is the function performed by the institution and not the specific institution itself. In other words, the same function may be performed by a variety of institutions.

There was a third theoretical contribution of Radcliffe-Brown, but it attracts little notice today. Following Fustel de Coulanges and Emile Durkheim, Radcliffe-Brown attempted to delineate the links between particular religious and social structures. At first glance there seemed to exist a close correspondance between totemism and clan systems, ancestor worship and lineage systems, and national religions and city states. Radcliffe-Brown

attempted to discern causal links between these particular social structures and their corresponding social systems. But as Evans-Pritchard (1965) and others have stressed, there are just too many exceptions to posit a uni-factoral sociological law about the relationship between society and religion. For example, there are tribal societies and city states which hold to universal religions, and there are tribes with pervasive lineages, such as the Cyrenaican Bedouins, who do not worship their ancestors. For lack of empirical validity, then, this third contribution of Radcliffe-Brown has failed to attract much of a following among anthropologists today.

PART II
CONTEMPORARY
RELIGIOUS ANTHROPOLOGY

1. S.F. NADIEL

Of all the inventors and masters only Radcliffe-Brown was reluctant to define religion. His reluctance is shared by many social anthropologists today. There appear to be two reasons for this. First, in British social anthropology there is a strong tendency towards empiricism. Emphasis is placed upon developing restricted theories which are anchored solidly in empirical evidence gathered during periods of research in the field. Theoretical speculation of a more general or universal nature is discouraged because of difficulties in verification. Discussion of theoretical concepts is often abruptly terminated with the appeal 'let's see how it is out in the field' as if religion 'out in the field' is somehow more real than religion as a theoretical concept. A second reason for the avoidance of definitional problems lies with the nature of religion itself. In the words of Edward Sapir, "religion is precisely one of those words that belong to the more intuitive portions of our vocabulary" and hence attempts to define religion incur problems which a definition of, say, economics, law, or politics would not. (Sapir, 1956, p.121)

Because of these difficulties many anthropologists have intentionally avoided definitional problems. A few, however, such as S.F. Nadel, have gone one step further and maintained that religion cannot be defined. This at least is the stance which he adopts in his book, Nupe Religion (1954). He writes that religion, because of its intuitive nature, "cannot be given a sharp connotation, therefore we have no choice, but to feel our way towards the meaning it should have in given circumstances" (1954, p.7). In support of this statement he cites that the Nupe have no special name for their religion. Names only exist for particular rituals and particular deities in their general religious system. Furthermore the Nupe do not think of their religion as something apart from their nation therefore "it would be meaningless to define religion by a separate concept" (ibid., p.2).

If religion is incapable of definition, what sort of approach might we use to investigate religion in the field? Not desiring to exclude anything which could possibly be considered religious, Nadel takes a very loose approach. Everything which could possibly be con-

sidered sacred in the life of a people is singled out for further examination. By sacred Nadel does not mean supernatural because supernatural is a Western linguistic category and does not possess an equivalent in Nupe. Moreover Nadel does not mean sacred in a Durkheimian sense. Sacred is contrasted with secular, not with profane, and for Nadel it is possible to distinguish between the sacred and the secular because primitive peoples usually have special terms for these two realms of experience. He writes:

Thus we shall place on one side behavior of a public and everyday kind, understood by the actors to aim at 'normal' effects, that is effects commensurate with ordinary human efforts and skills; and on the other, behavior understood to aim at extraordinary and miraculous results, involving super-human efficacy and achieved by esoteric (or 'sacred') skills. Our primary evidence will clearly be linguistic.... (ibid., p.6)

At first glance Nadel's approach is epistemologically quite ingenious. Religious action is to be differentiated from secular action by employing the very categories which a people use to differentiate in their own lives religious from secular action. By locating religion through indigenous linguistic categories rather than through Western anthropological concepts, Nadel seems to

have solved once and for all the dilemma which anthropologists face in trying to translate Western concepts into their non-Western equivalents. Moreover by approaching religion in this manner, Nadel does not become a victim of a culturally restricted outlook.

Let us briefly demonstrate how Nadel's approach enables one to formulate systematically a people's religious system. The Nupe speak of a God who is the creator of all life. God has intellect and awareness but he is not personified. (This use of the masculine gender is Nadel's and mine. The Nupe word for God does not imply any sexual identity.) Although He is all-knowing and all-powerful, His concern with mundane human affairs is rather limited. Moreover, this is how it should be. That human beings could or should have knowledge of or contact with God, is, for the Nupe, absurd. God must be approached through the good offices of the the lesser deities of the cosmos. Both these lesser deities and the rituals associated with them are referred to with the same word - 'kuti'. Kuti were given to the Nupe by God in order that human beings might sustain the well-being of the community. Kuti are public, beneficial, and generally efficacious. A second kind of ritual, however,

emerged over the course of time. This other kind of ritual, or 'cigbe', were not God-given but discovered by man in order that he might gain greater control over his private affairs in the face of God's aloofness. Cigbe are medicinal or magical in nature. They are more secret and esoteric than kuti and are held and inherited individually. In contrast with kuti, cigbe may cause either good or ill. They are asocial.

Human nature for the Nupe consists of two spirits: 'rayi' which is the animating spirit common to all animate beings and 'kuci', the personal soul, which enters the living body at birth and departs at death. At birth rayi, kuci, and the physical body come together and after a while are integrated within the child. One other component of the human personality is 'fifingi' which is one's shadow soul. During death rayi diminishes to nothing, kuci is reincarnated in one's offspring, the physical body deteriorates, and fifingi continues to exist in ghost form causing nightmares and haunting the lives of the living.

It would be possible to continue in this vein with a discussion of non-human spirits, spirit doubles, cult

groups, etc., but we have gone far enough to observe clearly how Nadel's approach is capable of delineating the structure of the Nupe religious system.

Let us briefly mention another of Nadel's contributions to religious anthropology. In the conclusion to Nupe Religion Nadel returns to theoretical considerations.

In keeping with the tenor of the introduction where he states that we must "feel our way towards the meaning [of religion]", Nadel endeavors to construct a typology of religious systems. Assuming vaguely that religion 'does' things for people, Nadel lists four main things which religion 'does' for individuals and societies. These four 'competences' are: 1) the capacity of religion "to furnish certain supplements to the view of the world of experience" which "our intelligence is driven to demand", 2) its capacity to announce and maintain moral values and its competence to guide "the practical impulses for action", 3) "its competence to hold together societies and sustain their structure", and 4) "its competence to furnish individuals with specific experiences and stimulations". (1954, p.259) Religion acts as a means in the first three competences and as

an end in and of itself in the final competence. Moreover, for Nadel, it is this fourth competence which distinguishes religion from science. Shifting axes, Nadel lists three elements of religion: 1) doctrine, 2) community of believers, 3) ritual actions. By corresponding the three elements of religion with its four competences Nadel sets up a typology by which anthropologists may organize their material on a particular religious system.

Having summarized and illustrated Nadel's method, we must now analyze it critically. At the basis of his approach to the ~~study~~ of religion lie two contradictory premises. First religion cannot be defined. Second religion is the sacred. These two premises will be taken up separately. The assertion that religion cannot be defined may or may not be true, but if it is true then it would be logically impossible to study the religion of a people. Without a definition there would be no criteria for distinguishing religious action from the mass of social and personal action. Thus Nadel's position is logically absurd and hence untenable.

Similarly Nadel's justification for this in terms of Nupe experience, viz., the Nupe have no collective name for their religion, rather they only have names for particular deities, spirits, and rituals; therefore it is not necessary to define religion, is equally untenable. Most non-Western peoples have no collective theoretical concept for their economic system. This, however, does not hinder economic anthropologists from defining economics, nor does it make it any less necessary that they do so. To state that the Nupe cannot refer to their religion in a collective sense is an anthropological fact, but to use this fact as an excuse to neglect/sharpening one's theoretical tools is unjustified.

Nadel probably recognized the illogicality of his initial premise, for he soon implicitly defined religion as the sacred. That he used indigenous linguistic categories to distinguish between the life of the sacred and the life of the secular is laudable because in this way it is possible to steer somewhat clear of the inherent biases of Western linguistic categories. Is Nadel's implicit definition valid? An initial criticism is that his definition assumes all people distinguish in their own language

the sacred from the secular. This, however, is an empirical consideration and its validity should be tested cross-culturally. Nadel does not do this.

A second criticism of Nadel's definition is more serious. Let us examine the religion of a more familiar people in terms of the sacred. In Western civilization linguistic categories referring to the sacred realm of experience are derived from Judeo-Christian culture. Thus a Nadelian investigation of Western religion would concentrate mainly upon Christian doctrine and the life of the church. Tested empirically, however, one would learn that a significant percentage of Western people are not concerned with Christianity and an equally significant percentage, although vaguely believing in Christian doctrine, do not participate in the life of the church. If an anthropologist were to employ Nadel's approach, he would have to decide very quickly what is to be done with those who do not participate in what has been linguistically defined as the sacred. Does one assume that these people should go to church; therefore the church is still the legitimate object of study, or does one assume that man does not necessarily need and/

or want to participate in the sacred, or does one propose that it may be possible to participate in the sacred life (non-linguistically defined) outside the Christian church? Neither of the first two alternatives is attractive. The first does not appeal because of its normative orientation and the second because it contradicts the underlying assumption of religious anthropology --- that man is by nature a religious animal. Only the third alternative remains, and that, of course, if selected would call into question the definition of religion as the sacred.

A final criticism of Nadel's approach is his definition of the sacred. In his definition Nadel restricts himself entirely to the manipulative aspects of religion. It is to be remembered that of the four competences of religion (explanation of the universe, economic ethic, social solidarity, and religious experience) the first three are, according to Nadel, primarily means whereas the fourth competence is an end in itself. Furthermore Nadel states that the fourth competence is the defining characteristic of religion. It is only this competence which distinguishes religion from science. Nadel's inability to insert what he would call the defining characteristic of religion

into his definition of religion is a most serious weakness. As a consequence his definition would not be very useful in examining transcendental religions.

This final criticism of Nadel's implicit definition brings us back to the reason why in the first place Nadel asserted that religion could not be defined. We are left with three possible courses of action. First, we could maintain, as Nadel does, that religion is an undefinable concept. This, however, would make the study of religion logically impossible. Second, we could intentionally evade the definitional problem, as Radcliffe-Brown did, but this would only lead to sloppy and perhaps Western biased analyses of religion. Third, we could grapple with the problems of defining religion in hopes that we might in the process learn something about the nature of religion. This third alternative seems to be the one most capable of yielding fruit.

2. EDMUND LEACH

Most of Leach's significant statements on religion are contained in publications devoted to other topics, such as myth, politics, and kinship. In consequence any systematic analysis of Leach's approach must bridge certain gaps in his writings. For example, nowhere does Leach define religion. In his recent work on myth he tends to associate religion with the supernatural. He has also written that "religion everywhere is pre-occupied with the . . . antimony of life and death. Religion seeks to deny the binary link between the two worlds; it does this by creating the mystical idea of 'another world', a land of the dead where life is perpetual" (1962a, p.31). In his earliest contribution to religious anthropology, Political Systems of Highland Burma (1954), Leach seems to avoid even the mention of religion. He discusses "concepts of the supernatural", myth, ritual, and "belief", but he does not qualify any of these concepts with the word religion. Since we do not have a clear idea of what Leach means by religion and since he has defined ritual, it would be best to

enter into this critique of Leach's approach with his treatment of ritual.

For Dr. Leach the purpose of anthropology is to elucidate the structural relationships within a social system:

.../structural descriptions/ provide us with an idealized model which states the 'correct' status relation existing between groups within the total system and between the social persons who make up particular groups. The position of any social person in any such model system is necessarily fixed, though individuals can be thought of as filling different positions in the performance of different kinds of occupation and at different stages in their career. (1954, p.9-10)

Ritual "serves to express the individual's status as a social person in the structural system in which he finds himself for the time being". (ibid., p.9-10) Ritual does not correspond with the supernatural or the metaphysical but with the sacred in a Durkheimian sense and is contrasted with technical action. Unlike Durkheim the sacred and profane are not mutually exclusive types of action but rather aspects of almost all social action.

At one extreme we have actions which are entirely profane, entirely functional, technique pure and simple; at the other we have actions which are entirely sacred, strictly aesthetic, technically nonfunctional. Between these two extremes we have a great majority of social action which partake partly of one sphere and

partly of the other. (ibid., p.12-13)

Myth and ritual are "one and the same thing". What myth states in words; ritual states in action. Both have meaning as symbols of social status. Leach here seems to equate myth with belief, for he also writes that "ritual action and belief are alike to be understood as forms of symbolic statement about the social order". (ibid., p.14) Does he mean by belief just religious belief? We are not sure. At any rate ritual, myth, ^{and} belief function for the participating group "to momentarily make explicit what is otherwise fiction". (ibid., p.16)

The people of Highland Burma interact with spiritual beings called 'nats'. The nats exercise some degree of influence over the lives of human beings. Illness and misfortune in the human world are attributed to the interference of the nats in human affairs. Sacrifices are offered to the nats in order to secure a good harvest, to have good fortune in one's business endeavors, and so on. Like humans the nats have their own society which is simply an extension of:

...the human class hierarchy to a higher level and /is/ continuous with it. In the nat world, as in the human world, there

are chiefs, aristocrats, commoners, and slaves. The commoners of the nat world are simply the deceased ancestors of the commoners of the human world; the aristocrats of the nat world are deceased human chiefs. (ibid., p.173)

Behavior in the nat world and behavior between humans and nats is structurally similar to behavior in the human world. For example, if a commoner wants to approach a chief, he would usually do so through the good offices of a wealthy commoner. Similarly for a human to approach a great deity he would normally do so through the good offices of a lesser deity. From these observations Leach concludes that "it is nonsensical to discuss the actions or qualities of supernatural beings except in terms of human action" (ibid., p.172) and further on he states that "from all this it becomes clear that the various nats of Kachin religious ideology are, in the last analysis, nothing more than ways of describing the formal relationships that exist between real persons and real groups in ordinary human Kachin society". (ibid., p.182)

In general Leach's approach is well within the confines of Durkheim's definition and approach to religion. He is critical of the naive functionalism of Radcliffe-Brown

when he writes that:

Myth and ritual is a language of signs in terms of which ~~claims~~ claims to rights and statuses are expressed, but it is a language of argument, not a chorus of harmony. If ritual is sometimes a mechanism of integration, one could as well argue that it is often a mechanism of disintegration. (ibid., p.278)

There is one attitude, however, which underlies Leach's approach and which distinguishes him radically from his intellectual ancestors. It is one thing to maintain as Durkheim did that religious ideology is derived from the social structure, but it is quite another thing to state that religious ideology is "nothing more than ways of describing formal relationships. . . in ordinary human Kachin society". Durkheim's view was that religion was a projective system "by means of which individuals represent the society of which they are members and the relationships, obscure but intimate, which they have with it". (1964, p.323) Religion, as a projective system, is an illusion, but it is so only for rational man. For the mass of humanity, both civilized and primitive, religion is believed in and accepted as real. Leach's position tends toward cynicism. Religion is only a way of symbolically stating status relationships of a people.

By stating that religion is a "language of signs in terms of which claims to rights and statuses are expressed", he implies that people recognize their illusions as illusions. In sum then Leach imputes to man a degree of self-consciousness concerning religious systems which is not at all found in the writings of Durkheim, Radcliffe-Brown, or any of the other contemporary anthropologists discussed in this thesis.

This attitude which underlies Leach's approach seems in part to be derived from an assumption concerning human nature which underlies his study of the political systems of the Kachin people. He writes "I assume that individuals faced with a choice of action will commonly use such choice so as to gain power...." (ibid., p.10) This assumption, although perhaps naive by psychological standards, is, in one respect, warranted, for Leach's intention at that time was an investigation of political systems. Certainly religious ritual may be used for political ends. But Leach goes further than this. By asserting that religion is nothing more than an expression of claims for status, religion is reduced to a form of political behavior. Of course, if one assumes that man is basically a political

animal then by deduction all other kinds of behavior--- economic, religious, sexual, etc.,--- will seem to be political.

In the last analysis a critique of Leach's approach must center upon this assumption of human nature. Is it valid? No doubt men are political creatures, but certainly not so to the exclusion of other aspects of their nature. One can observe that human beings are also guided by an economic rationale. Perhaps one could even postulate, as Durkheim did, that ritual serves to organize human experience in meaningful terms. If this is so, then we could assume as well that man is a religious animal.

Political Systems of Highland Burma may be a contribution to political anthropology, but it is certainly not a contribution to religious anthropology. In this book by reducing religion to a form of political behavior, Leach is explaining politics, not religion.

In one of Dr. Leach's most recent statements on religion ("Virgin Birth", 1967) he attempts to define the nature and significance of the conception beliefs of the Tully River Blacks, Trobriand Islanders, et al. According to

the ethnographers these people believe that there is no connection between sexual intercourse and pregnancy. The thread of Leach's argument is difficult to find at times because Leach himself seems to lose it. In places he contends that it is an ethnographic fact that the Tully River Blacks do not believe that there is any biological connection between copulation and pregnancy. He writes:

Doctrines about the possibility of conception taking place without male insemination do not stem from innocence and ignorance; on the contrary they are consistent with theological argument of the greatest subtlety. (1967, p.39)

At other times Leach seems to contend that the aborigines acknowledge the male role in insemination but that many anthropologists argue the opposite because "they seem to gain reassurance from supposing that the people they study have the simple-minded ignorance of small children". (ibid., p.48) The latter statement calls into question the validity of the ethnographic 'facts' concerning reproduction among the Tully River Blacks. Whether Leach is right or wrong is beyond dispute, until somebody comes up with some more 'facts' about these people.

Let us return to the former statement. In brief Leach's

thesis is as follows: certain aboriginal peoples of Australia have a cultural belief that insemination does not result in conception. This belief, however, is not really believed to be true by the aborigines. Rather it is a "species of religious dogma; the truth which it expresses does not relate to the ordinary matter-of-fact world of everyday things but to metaphysics". (p.45) Moreover this belief is a statement of "the relationship between the woman's child and the clansmen of the woman's husband" (p.39). In other words, the conception belief is not really about conception but about patrilateral filiation.

What then is the metaphysical implication of this conception belief? Leach contends that virgin birth is a mediation between this world and the 'other-world', between the here and now and the mythological time of the gods and ancestors. In support of his thesis Leach cites the Christian doctrine of the virgin birth of Jesus Christ. In a similar way Jesus mediates between God and human beings. This, however, does not seem to be an accurate analogy. The significance^c of the virgin birth of Jesus Christ was to establish his uniqueness. Virgin

birth could only occur by a miracle. This does not seem to be the meaning of the Tully River conception belief. Virgin birth is not miraculous but quite normal. Offspring are human, not divine. Leach's interpretation does not fit the evidence. In fact the only metaphysical interpretation which does seem to fit the evidence is the one offered by the Tully River Blacks themselves, viz., animals conceive through male insemination of the female. Since human beings do not conceive in this way, human beings are different from and superior to animals.

The second part of Leach's thesis states that the Tully River Blacks are actually aware of the relationship between insemination and pregnancy. Rather the manifest content of the conception belief is to "establish categories and affirm relationships". Leach, however, presents no evidence whatsoever in support of this thesis. Moreover he is unable to provide a satisfactory answer to the question why a people would hold onto a cultural belief which they do not believe in simply to state something else?

In summary Dr. Leach's structuralism leaves one bewildered.

This is partly due to his rather confusing and contradictory manner of writing. In "Virgin Birth" he is more intent upon libelling his colleagues than proving the validity of his own theories. All this aside, however, there are two related aspects of his approach which are very discomforting. The first question involved the latent versus manifest meaning of a cognitive belief. Leach maintains in places that it is the manifest meaning of religion to express structural relationships within the social system. This leads him to the ridiculous posture of even having to reject the meaning which the Tully River Blacks attach to virgin birth. Or to take another example, he states that the Kachin hill people use the nats to express claims for status. Isn't it a possibility that the Kachin hill people actually believe in the existence of the nats who are to some degree efficacious in human affairs? Leach always seems to assume that the people whom he is studying are also deep down structuralists at heart.

The second criticism of Leach's approach calls into question his interpretation of religion. By treating religion as a form of symbolic statement of the social

order, he limits the scope and application of his approach. Certainly Leach's approach would be unable to explain religions of personal liberation as well as universal religions of a complex society. In fact Leach's approach is limited to just those societies with a lived-in cosmology; in other words, where the cosmology^o is thought of in terms of the social order. Furthermore even in these societies, as Turner has shown in his analysis of 'kavula' (Turner, 1962a), there may not necessarily be a one to one relationship between religion and society. The meaning of kavula applies itself to the experience of being human and not just to the experience of being human in a social order. In other words religion is born of personal as well as social experience. Leach's structuralism, by treating religion solely as a form of symbolic statement of the social order, produces a rather neat but inadequate understanding of religion.

3. ROBIN HORTON

Robin Horton is the foremost advocate of neo-Tylorism in social anthropology. In an article entitled "A Definition of Religion, and its Uses" (1960) Horton analyzes and evaluates the major social anthropological approaches to the study of religion, selects Tylor's definition as the most useful of the lot, and proceeds to explore the advantages of such a definition. In later articles he develops his approach in two directions: sociological and intellectual. Let us begin this critique of Horton's approach by considering his reasons for adopting Tylor's definition and then continue with an investigation of the sociological and intellectual aspects of his approach.

The major social anthropological approaches to religion which Horton selects for evaluation are the 'non-definitional' approach of S.F. Nadel, the 'symbolic' approach of Emile Durkheim, Edmund Leach, et al, and the 'intellectualist' approach of Edward Tylor. All three of these approaches have been examined previously in this thesis so there is no need to state them again. It would be worth-

while, however, to mention Horton's criticisms of Nadel, Leach, and Tylor. Nadel's approach, viz., religion is too intuitive to define therefore we will have to feel our way toward the meaning it has in each particular situation, is rejected by Horton because without a definition it would be impossible to differentiate the religious life from the secular. Without such a means of differentiation the study of religion would be a theoretical impossibility. (Nadel, however, did suggest that the 'sacred' could be distinguished from the secular through an investigation of indigenous linguistic categories. Horton neglects to mention this and hence his criticism of Nadel is somewhat inaccurate.) The second type of approach as espoused by Edmund Leach, viz., religion is a system of symbolic statements concerning social relationships, is likewise rejected because the "symbolic function is only a by-product of religious activity and is the result of prior structural associations whose formations have nothing to do with symbolism". (1960b, p.204) The third approach which Horton considers stems from Tylor's minimal definition of religion as the belief in spiritual beings. Horton

has reservations about this definition as well. Such a definition would be misleading for one attempting to differentiate epistemologically between religious and non-religious objects. Nuer free spirits are invisible and not associated with any particular locality. The Nuer believe in the existence of free spirits because they are able to observe their visible effects in the world of men. Thus underlying the Nuer belief in free spirits is the assumption that "variations in the observable are symptoms of certain variations in the unobservable". (*ibid.*, p.206) In Horton's opinion this assumption is also common to Western science. For example, nuclear physicists assume the existence of high energy particles which are invisible to even the most powerful of microscopes because the effects of these particles are visible and detectable by scientific equipment. Epistemologically then Tylor's definition does not help us to distinguish religious from secular objects.

But for Horton the major benefit of Tylor's definition is that it focuses attention upon interaction between human beings and religious beings. There are some anthropologists, however, who would argue against the notion

that human beings can interact with spirits. Such people maintain that the relationships of a man with his god or gods is psychologically something quite different and set apart from normal human social relationships.

Human relationships are characterized by flexibility.

Ego and alter both attempt to define the situation.

Relationships between gods and human beings are characterized by their stereotyped nature. Moreover the relationship is unequal, for the gods are omnipotent. Horton, however, rebuts these possible criticisms. First he cites William James to lend support to his argument that man/spirit relationships are not different from man/man relationships. According to WilliamsJames:

...religious sentiment...contains nothing whatever of a psychologically specific nature. There is religious fear, religious love, religious awe, religious joy, and so forth. But religious love is man's natural emotion of love directed to a religious object; religious fear is only ordinary fear... in so far as the notion of divine retribution may arouse it....

As there thus seems to be no one elementary religious emotion, but only a common storehouse of emotions upon which religious objects may draw, so there might conceivably also prove to be no one specific and essential kind of religious object,

and no one specific and essential kind of religious act. (Wm. James, 1958, p.40)

Furthermore many social relationships are stereotyped, and religious relationships, as in the case of mysticism, may be very flexible. It is also not always the case that man is impotent before the gods. This is certainly not the case with African polythesim where the gods are often viewed as instruments through which humans can attain various goals. One of the major paradoxes of many primitive religions is that the gods are omnipotent yet susceptible in large measure to human control.

Having cleared the pathway of this possible criticism of an approach which deals with religion in terms of interaction between humans and gods, Horton defines religion as:

...an extension of the field of people's social relationships beyond the confines of purely human society. And for the sake of completeness we should add the rider that this extension must be one in which human beings involved see themselves in a dependent position vis-a-vis their non-human alters--- a qualification necessary to exclude pets from the pantheon of gods. (1960b, p.211)

Horton states that in order for a definition to be a useful anthropological tool, it should stick fairly

close to the common sense meaning of the word, but, on the other hand, should not be culture-bound. In his opinion his definition satisfies these two criteria. Furthermore he asserts that his definition is close to the notion of religion held by historians and psychologists. He does not, however, mention who these particular historians and psychologists are.

From his definition Horton develops his approach in two complementary directions: sociological and intellectual. Let us take each of these in turn. It follows from Horton's definition that:

...in fact there is no 'something extra' which distinguishes all religious relationships from all secular relationships.... I suggest that the mode of difference varies from society to society. (*ibid.*, p.211)

Thus variables used to classify human interaction may be equally applied to man/spirit relations. One set of variables which Horton employs is a communion/manipulation scale. In communion relationships ego acts to evoke certain responses in alter which are of intrinsic value to ego. Examples of communion relationships include mysticism and romantic love. In manipulative relationships

alters response is merely the means by which ego attempts to attain a certain goal which has been defined without reference to his relationship with alter. Examples of manipulative relationships can be found in business and politics as well as numerous religious systems such as the Kalabari and Nupe. All religious relationships could be placed somewhere along the ~~manipulative~~/communion continuum. By analyzing various man/spirit relationships among the Kalabari in terms of this manipulation/communion continuum, Horton is able to devise a theory of god/group coordination. The three assumptions of his theory are:

I. The individual member of any society pursues a given goal with several different levels of social-structural reference. Such a goal will generally be pursued with different references on different occasions. To take an example, a member of a given social category in an African village community may actively pursue goals of health, wealth, and increase of the village as a whole, for the descent group of which he is a member and for himself as an individual. Generally, his concern with one of these structural levels on a given occasion excludes for the moment his concern with the others.

II. The religious relationships in which the members of a society are involved function as instruments to the achievement of their various goals. Where there is any change in the structure of such

goals, the religious relationships will always change and develop towards the point at which they can be seen by those involved as severally making a contribution to all their goals at all of the latter's various levels of reference. Where the structure of goals become stabilized, this point is one at which the system of religious relationships also become stabilized.

III. In a society where the relations between segments of the total group are markedly competitive, the fact that a god and its cult are seen as contributing to the members' goals at the total group level of reference ipso facto implies that they cannot be seen as contributing to the same goals at the next lower level of reference, i.e., that of the segments, /and conversely/.n(ibid., p.213)

Horton's sociological approach as quoted here contains two marked improvements upon the Durkheim and Radcliffe-Brown tradition. First, religion is not seen ipso facto as an integrative force for the social structure at its widest level of reference. Rather religious systems relate to the goals of a people. Goals may exist at all levels of structural reference: individual, family, descent group, village, tribe, etc. In so far as a goal is pursued at one level of reference only, then the pursuit of this goal may be disruptive for other reference groups. Thus "religious activity tends to be

as integrative or as disintegrative as the particular congregation or individual wants it to be". (ibid., p.215) Furthermore the Durkheimian identity of religion, collective action, and socially legitimate goals is recognized as invalid. Religious goals are socially constituted but not necessarily socially approved. Second, Horton's theory, by relating religious activity with human goals, is capable of dealing with situations of change, such as the Cargo cults. "Worsley shows that the pre-Cargo cult religious systems of the people he deals with contained nothing which could be seen as contributing to the goals of action at the new level of reference and interprets the Cargo cults as being developed to fill this gap." (ibid., p.216) Moreover, Horton's theory is able to cope with situations of selective change. Among the Kalabari two of the most important spirits in their traditional religion were the village heroes and the water people. Village heroes served to protect the welfare and security of the collectivity; water people helped individuals attain their private aspirations. Belief in the village heroes and the water people, however, is incompatible with the teachings of Christian-

ity. With the pax Britannica the village heroes lost their major function and consequently have been eliminated from Kalabari religion. The water people are still propitiated by the Kalabari with much rationalization of their Christian beliefs.

Horton takes this analysis in terms of manipulation and communion one step further by proposing that among all peoples there will be a general balance in their social relationships between communion and manipulation. For example, he contends that for Western man it has become increasingly difficult to experience genuine communion relationships within the life of the Christian church because of the routinization of Christian ritual. Rather modern man seeks communion in personal love. This hypothesis is similar to one offered by Talcott Parsons. Parsons in his analysis of the American family suggested that as business relationships have become more and more impersonal in American society men have sought deeper personal relationships with their wives or lovers. Thus, for Horton's purposes, a religion of a highly manipulative nature will be balanced within

the socio-cultural system by activities of a more communion nature, and vice versa. And, carrying this hypothesis to its logical conclusion, both types of relationships, communion and manipulative, help fill deep-rooted psychological needs of the individual.

The intellectual aspect of Horton's approach follows from the statement that "...the really significant aspiration behind a great deal of African religious thought is the most obvious one; i.e., the attempt to explain and influence the working of one's everyday world by discovering the constant principles that underlie the apparent chaos and flux of sensory experience". (1964, p.97) As theoretical models of an intellectual order, traditional African religious systems are comparable in many ways to Western science. Most of Horton's recent publications are devoted to developing this theme. In an article which appeared in Africa (1967) Horton sets out a number of general propositions concerning the nature and function of theoretical thinking. These propositions include:

1. The quest for explanatory theory

is basically the quest for unity underlying apparent diversity; for simplicity underlying apparent complexity; for order underlying apparent disorder; for regularity underlying apparent anomaly....

3. Common sense and theory have complementary roles in everyday life.
4. The level of theory varies with the context.
5. All theory breaks up the unitary objects of common sense into aspects, then places the resulting elements in a wider causal context. That is, it first abstracts and analyzes, then re-integrates.
6. In evolving a theoretical scheme, the human mind seems constrained to draw inspiration from analogy between puzzling observations to be explained and certain already familiar phenomena.

In other articles Horton demonstrates how these propositions of theoretical thinking are applicable for the kalabari religious system. In "The Kalabari World-View" (Africa, 1962) Horton delineates four levels of reference in kalabari religious thought. These are: the human world which includes all tangible and visible objects; fixed and free spirits which are invisible lesser deities active in the human world; 'tamuno', a spirit determining individual destiny; and the Supreme Being

creator of the world without whose presence nothing ultimately happens in the world. Depending upon the context different levels of reality are invoked for explanatory purposes. Isolated personal misfortune is probably due to the activities of the free spirits. A whole series of unfortunate personal events is most likely caused by one's tamuno. Ordinary sensory experience is explained at the lowest level of mundane reality. If all three of these levels are incapable of interpreting satisfactorily a particular situation, then at least at the ultimate level of the Supreme being everything is explainable. As one ascends in levels of reference the complexity of events, by being placed in a wider context, are explained more simply. Furthermore as in Western science as one ascends in levels of reference, the invisible is invoked to explain the visible. Thus in respect to Horton's proposition concerning the nature of theoretical thinking, there is a marked similarity between traditional African religious systems and scientific thinking.

Indeed these similarities are even more striking when

Horton compares the Kalabari notion of destiny with psychoanalytic theory. ("Destiny and the Unconscious in West Africa", Africa, 1961) The Kalabari model of the human personality consists of two elements: the 'biogmbo' and the 'teme'. The biogmbo is associated with conscious feelings, desires, and thoughts whereas the teme determines one's life destiny. It controls the biogmbo. The biogmbo, moreover, is unable to discern the activities of the teme. Personality conflict is due to conflict between destiny (tame) and the conscious (biogmbo). Personality conflict normally results in personal misfortune. In Horton's words:

Here we have the whole cycle of neurotic conflict and its resolution in virtually Freudian terms. First comes the traumatic experience, taking place at a time beyond the range of the victim's present consciousness--- an experience of the frustration of some powerful desire. Then there comes an unconscious fear and avoidance of pursuing this desire.... Finally, there is the dragging out of unconscious fears by an expert and then presentation to the victim who is supposed to cure himself by recognizing and renouncing them. Underlying all this is the Freudian vision of the individual as an unhappily enforced association of several distinct and warring personalities. (p.113)

There are, of course, differences between African religious

thought and scientific thinking. African theoretical models invoke persons to explain events whereas the sciences invoke things. Also traditional thought is closed whereas science is open to the possibilities of alternative systems of explanation. These differences between traditional and scientific thinking are to be explained in terms of social structure, ecology, etc. These factors are seen by Horton to constitute the set of variables which determine the kind of theoretical system. Thus, although scientific and traditional thought have their differences, nevertheless they are still both different types of the same construction --- theoretical models --- and both are a product of the same species of "theory-building man".

Several criticisms could be lodged here. First, Horton assumes primitive religion to be a consistent explanatory system. He writes that "as in a body of scientific theory, each level unifies phenomena which appears disparate at the level below it". (1962a, p.213) The implication here is that all phenomena can be explained, if not by lower levels of reference then certainly at higher levels.

This implication is somewhat misleading. It is very doubtful that the structure of one's belief system is perfectly integrated. Different beliefs and attitudes when carried to their logical conclusion often contradict each other. Furthermore human experience itself may be contradictory or some aspects of human experience may not fit in with the culturally patterned system of explanation. This is made clear in Turner's discussion of 'kavula'. (Turner, 1962a) Kavula is unexplainable. In other words, Horton's intellectualism tends to overlook anomalies in human experience.

A second criticism of Horton's intellectualism is his rational bias. In reply to Turner's proposal for the use of the concept "ritual man" in religious anthropology (Turner, 1962a), Horton suggests that "ritual man" is actually a sub-species of "theory-building man". (Horton, 1964) Horton writes of the "African thinker" who fashions the gods from the people. (1964, p.99-100) No doubt there are particular individuals in every community who are given to thinking about and interpreting events. Indeed these individuals may even contribute to their

people's store of knowledge which in turn will be passed down through successive generations. But Horton goes further than this by suggesting that religion is causally a product of thought. He offers no evidence whatsoever to substantiate this assumption. We may note that most religions account for their origins in terms of the founder's enlightenment, a vision or dream, or in terms of a mythical figure descended from the gods, but certainly it would be difficult to find a religion which attributes its origins to rational thought. Furthermore of the few religions whose origins have been recorded by ethnographers, none seem to have emerged out of the efforts of "theory-building man". For example, the Ghost-Dance religion of the Plains Indians during the latter part of the nineteenth century originated in the dream visions of a particular Paiute Indian. That the Ghost-Dance religion became popular among the Plains Indians is a result of certain historical, cultural, and social factors. The thesis which underlies Horton's sociologism, viz., "religious systems tend to take such forms as are seen to make a contribution to all the goals of a society's members at

all their levels of structural reference" (1960b, p. 215), seems quite capable of explaining how and why a religion spreads among a people; however, his proposal that religion is a product of rational thought seems widely off the mark.

Let us return now to Horton's definition of religion. It is to be remembered that there are three points to his definition: 1) existence of alter(s) outside the realms of human society, 2) a social relationship between ego and alter, 3) a sense of dependence by ego upon alter. In testing the validity of his definition Horton applied two criteria: does the definition adhere to common sense usage and does the definition avoid being culture-bound. Horton's first criterion incurs several problems. To accept a definition because it holds to common sense seems a rather unprofessional attitude to uphold. Common sense is necessarily part of a people's socio-cultural outlook and therefore limiting with respect to space and time. In other words, common sense is a very culture-bound sense of mind, and thus Horton's first criterion conflicts with his

second. Furthermore to hold to common sense would restrict the growth of anthropology's understanding of religion to the level of understanding of religion held by the general populace. If natural scientists had used Horton's criterion of common sense then the earth would still be flat. The point here is that if religion can be shown to be something quite other than what it is commonly held to be by twentieth century Westerners then it would seem wise to discard our common sense. That such a possibility exists, viz., that religion may be something quite other than what it is commonly thought to be, can be inferred from the following statement from Gordon Kaufman's Relativism, Knowledge, and Faith:

In consequence of this historical separation of art and philosophy from religion, modern philosophies of culture have tended to understand religion almost exclusively in terms of the peculiar kinds of activity or modes of interpretation carried on in that relatively narrow realm of culture called 'religion'. This kind of approach to religion has many difficulties, not the least of which is that it turns religion into something quite other than itself. For religion, as Tillich contends, has in reality to do with man's 'ultimate concern' and the ultimate concern of most of our lives has little, if any, relation to what occurs in some obscure and esoteric corner of culture. (Kaufman, 1960, p.131)

Horton's second criterion of universality also has problems. Religion is universal only in so far as we define it to be so. To derive a definition from an analysis of the 'religions' of the world then test the definition for universality is either a tautology or an illogicality. It is tautological in the sense that the definition will necessarily be universal because everything else stands outside the limits of one's definition, and it is illogical in the case of the definition not being universal because how could we know that a 'religion' would fall outside the scope of the definition if it is no longer considered by definition to be a religion? The only way out of this bind is to use our common knowledge and ask the following question: are there any so-called religions which, according to our common knowledge, are classified as religions but which fall outside Horton's definition thereby rendering the definition invalid because it fails to meet the criterion of universality? In the case of Horton's definition there are several definitions which come to mind. For an example we could cite Zen Buddhism.

As is so often the case with universal religions, Zen

Buddhism has many sects. Furthermore Zen has mingled with the local folk religions of Japan and China and in the process has acquired supernatural beings in the eyes of the general populace of these countries. But Zen as it is practiced by its devotees would fall outside the scope of Horton's definition. It may be argued by some anthropologists that it is invalid to take for an example of a religion those few who have wholeheartedly devoted themselves to the religion rather than the mass of men whose interest in religion (as it is commonly understood) is minimal. My attitude, however, is that if there are people, either as individuals or as groups, who devote their lives to their religion, then they are just as valid for study as those who do not devote themselves to the religious life.

It is not very easy to define Zen nor would it be very Zen-like to do so. We can, however, state some general characteristics of Zen. First, Zen is an experience of awakening or liberation which cannot be circumscribed by words. Second, there exist Zen monasteries where Zen masters assist devotees to attain this experience of liberation. It is not, in fact, necessary for a devotee

of Zen to become a monk or to join a monastery. Indeed there is a tradition in Zen Buddhism of the asocial aimless wanderer who seeks and finds his own liberation. This is in accordance with the teachings of Zen because according to the masters Zen has nothing to teach. As an old Zen poem says:

If you do not get it from yourself,
Where will you go for it?

In consequence there is no Zen doctrine. Zen Buddhists consider all doctrines to be equally false because they are doctrines. In other words, truth cannot be put into words, or ^{to} state this more truthfully the 'truth' of Zen transcends all distinctions of the conscious mind including the distinction of truth and falsehood. Moreover, Zen has no system of beliefs. One believes only in so far as one knows, and one can know only in so far as one experiences. There are no spiritual beings to propitiate or worship. Buddha is not revered as a supernatural being. In the words of Lin-chi, "If a man seeks the Buddha, that man loses the Buddha" because to seek Buddhahood or Buddha is to superimpose an identity upon one's true or natural self --- the result of this being the imprisonment of one's mind rather than the liberation. In sum,

then, Zen is not a system of beliefs, and it is not necessarily an institution or a group in any formal sense of the word. Devotees of Zen may enter into a dependent relationship with a master, but they most certainly ~~do~~ not enter into a dependent relationship with a non-human ~~alter~~. Furthermore the dependent relationship between the monk and master is temporary. Upon attainment of liberation the master is no longer necessary, and the relationship is terminated. We may conclude then that Horton's definition of religion does not meet his criterion of universality.

If we are willing to grant Zen Buddhism the status of a religion then social relationships and dependence upon non-human alter are not the sine qua non of religion. Without any doubt most religions are derived from and oriented toward the socio-cultural realm of experience. For such religions Horton's sociological approach would be instructive. There are, however, several religions, such as Vedanta, Taoism, Yoga, and Zen Buddhism, which are radically oriented toward the individual. Indeed in Vedanta and Mahayana Buddhism the socio-cultural realm is thought of as an illusion (māyā). Horton's

sociologism breaks down here. His intellectualism almost comes to the rescue. Horton maintains that religion is the gods; the function of the gods is to explain. The gods, however, are simply one form which religion can take. It may be possible to arrive at a universal definition of religion as well as a more fruitful understanding of the nature of religion if one were to maintain simply that religion is to explain. We shall return to a discussion of this point in the final section of this thesis.

4. MELFORD SPIRO

spiro has been labeled a neo-Tylorian by Leach and others because Spiro's definition of religion is very similar to the one proposed by Edward Tylor nearly a century ago. This label, however, is very misleading because their approaches are radically dissimilar. Tylor arrived at his definition via nineteenth century positivism. Spiro arrived at Tylor's definition via psychoanalytic theory. For Tylor man's belief in spiritual beings emerged from his attempt to understand his experience. For Spiro beliefs in supernatural beings are projections of the child's parental (or parental surrogate) imagos. Except for a similar definition and a willingness to accept at face value the manifest content of a people's religious beliefs Spiro has little in common with Tylor as well as the neo-Tylorians of the social anthropological school.

Let us begin with Spiro's definition of religion. Rather than propose a new definition, Spiro catalogues various definitions existent in anthropology and rejects those which he finds unsuitable. Two definitions which have

come to anthropology from theology he disposes of immediately. These are: religious behavior is other-worldly, and religion is the state of being ultimately concerned. The former is rejected because only mystical religions are other-worldly. There are many religions where super-human beings are conceived of as means or agents in the attainment of mundane goals rather than as ends in and of themselves. The latter definition, originally proposed by Paul Tillich, is rejected because for the mass of men religion is not a matter of ultimate concern. Furthermore Spiro argues, many secular beliefs, such as communism, may also be matters of ultimate concern. Thus ultimate concern is neither an accurate or a realistic criterion of religion.¹

Next Spiro rejects functional definitions of religion,, popular among many social anthropologists, because they mistake a functional variable (the promotion of social solidarity) for a real definition. Other kinds of

1. It is obvious, however, from Spiro's completely mis-directed criticisms of Tillich's definition that he has failed to grasp the profound significance of religion as ultimate concern. We shall return to Tillich's definition in the final section of the thesis.

socio-cultural behavior, such as monogamy, imperialism, communism, etc., foster social solidarity as well.

A functional definition is unable to distinguish religious behavior from these other kinds of social behavior which also promote social solidarity. Thus "social solidarity does not explain religion; religion explains social solidarity". (1966a, p.119)

Inevitably Spiro's search for a definition of religion narrows down to a consideration of Tylor and Durkheim. Spiro settles for Tylor. Durkheim's definition with reference to the sacred is rejected because it is impossible, using this definition, to distinguish religious behavior from other kinds of sacred social phenomena, such as patriotism. Next Spiro rejects Durkheim's criticisms of Tylor, viz., that many primitive peoples make no distinction between natural and supernatural, that some religions such as Buddhism do not hold beliefs in supernatural beings, and that for these reasons a definition of religion in terms of supernatural beings lacks universality. Spiro maintains, however, that a definition of religion need not be universal; rather it must have cross-

cultural applicability and intra-cultural intuitivity.

In short, once we free the word 'religion' from all value judgments, there is no reason either for dismay or elation concerning the empirical distribution of religion attendant upon our definition. With respect to Theravada Buddhism, then, what loss to science would have ensued if Durkheim had decided that, as he interpreted it, it was atheistic, and therefore not a religion? I can only see gain. (*ibid.*, p.88-89)

Furthermore Spiro contends that Durkheim's example of Buddhism is inaccurate because, in fact, Buddhism involves the belief in superhuman beings. Burmese Buddhists pray to Buddha and ask for his intercession in their worldly affairs. Thus, in respect to this instance, Spiro maintains that Durkheim was wrong to reject Tylor's definition because it would supposedly exclude Buddhism. Spiro adds:

...there are, to be sure, atheistic Buddhist philosophies as there are atheistic Hindu philosophies --- but it is certainly a strange spectacle when anthropologists, of all people, confuse the teachings of a philosophical school with the beliefs and behavior of a religious community. (*ibid.*, p.93)

Having disposed of Durkheim and asserted the near universal distribution of the belief in supernatural beings,

Spiro turns to Tylor. For Spiro, Tylor's definition has both crosscultural applicability and intracultural intuitivity. Spiro offers no evidence in support of this assertion. Presumably he considers its validity so obvious that it doesn't warrant further explanation. In conclusion he writes:

For me, therefore, any definition of 'religion' which does not include, as a key variable, the belief in the superhuman --- I won't muddy the metaphysical waters with 'supernatural' --- beings who have power to help or harm man is counter-intuitive. (*ibid.*, p.91)

and further on he offers his definition of religion:

On the assumption that religion is a cultural institution, and on the further assumption that all institutions --- though not all of their features --- are instrumental means for the satisfaction of needs, I shall define 'religion' as 'an institution consisting of culturally patterned interaction with culturally postulated superhuman beings...' (*ibid.*, p.96)

By interaction Spiro refers to both action which is believed to be consistent with the will of the superhuman beings as well as action which is believed to influence superhuman beings in order to satisfy the needs of the actors. Spiro adds that these superhuman beings

are culturally postulated and human interaction with them ~~is~~ culturally patterned. This distinction must be inserted in order that there be no confusion between the private rituals of obsessive-compulsive neurotics and religion. Religion, as a socio-cultural institution, must be studied like any other socio-cultural institution:

All institutions consist of belief systems, i.e., an enduring organization of cognitions about one or more aspects of the universe; action systems, an enduring organization of behavior patterns designed to attain ends for the satisfaction of needs; and value systems, an enduring organization of principles by which behavior can be judged on some scale of merit. Religion differs from other institutions in that its three component systems have reference to superhuman beings. (ibid., p.98)

It should be mentioned, however, that although belief, action, and value systems are analytically distinct and equally essential components of institutions, Spiro treats belief systems as logically, psychologically, and chronologically prior to action (ritual) systems. A corollary of this is that the persistence of religion is to be explained not only through formal religious training and teaching and ritual but also through the

acquisition of a perceptual set acquired during childhood. The perceptual set consists of the hypotheses and expectations concerning the structure of the social world, the kinds of acts which are instrumental for the gratification of needs, etc. Spiro writes:

When this enduring perceptual set is consistent with the cognitive set of his religious tradition, i.e., when the structure of his private fantasy system, acquired in experience, is isomorphic with the structure of his society's culturally constituted fantasy system (religion), which he acquires through instruction, the former projected into the latter system provides the experiential basis for his conviction that his taught religious beliefs are true. In short, for the actor religious beliefs are true, not only because they are transmitted with the authority of tradition, but because he has personally experienced their truth. His taught beliefs are readily assimilated into a perceptual set which is acquired prior to their transmission. (1964, p.114)

In explaining the continuity of a religious system over time or the persistence of a religion in the face of rival beliefs, Spiro's approach as outlined above is more adequate than the functional approach of Radcliffe-Brown or the intellectualist approach of Edward Tylor. If, as according to Tylor, religious beliefs were acquired simply out of an attempt to understand experience, there

would be no reason for the individual to hold to his beliefs in favor^{of} of a rival belief if that rival belief were more convincing. This, of course, rarely ever happens^{because}, religious beliefs are confirmed by experience which is in turn perceived through what Spiro calls the perceptual set. It is the perceptual set which provides the motivational basis of religion; moreover, it is the perceptual set which explains the tenacity of religious beliefs in the face of other rival religious beliefs.

Spiro summarizes his theory by writing:

...although religious beliefs rest on a cognitive basis, they persist because of their motivational basis. Their tenacity in the face of rival scientific beliefs may be simply explained --- scientific beliefs may be functional alternatives for religious beliefs, but they are not their functional equivalents. Religious beliefs have no functional equivalents; being less satisfying, alternative beliefs are rejected as less convincing. (*ibid.*, p.112)

Religion persists because it satisfies desires, but religion exists or is caused by the expectation of satisfying desires. Thus the acquisition of religious beliefs is to be explained causally while the practice of religion is to be explained functionally in terms of motivation. Spiro writes:

The motivational basis for the practice of a behavior pattern, then, is not merely the intention of satisfying a need, but the expectation that its performance will in fact achieve this end. Institutional behavior, including religious behavior, consists in the practice of repeated instances of culturally constituted behavior patterns --- or customs. Like other behavior patterns they persist as long as they are practiced; and they are practiced because they satisfy or are believed to satisfy, their instigating needs. If this is so, an explanation for the practice of religion must be sought in the set of needs whose expected satisfaction motivates religious belief and the performance of religious ritual. (1966a, p.106-107)

Spiro expands his motivational approach to the study of religion by delineating three sets of desires which religion satisfies: cognitive, substantive, and expressive. The cognitive desire is the desire to find meaning in life and to understand one's experience. Substantive desires include fertility, prosperity, good health, victory in battle, abundant harvests, etc. Religion, in the absence of competing technologies, satisfies these desires by offering some measure of confidence that these desires can be satisfied and that suffering can be overcome. Failure of a religion, however, to satisfy a substantive desire does not call into

question the truth of that religion. Religion is a total explanatory system. It can account for success and failure, good and evil, morality and immorality. If, for example, the rains do not come and therefore the harvest is meagre, the religious system can provide an explanation for this such as the people have fallen away from the commandments or there is interlineage enmity in the village. Finally religion satisfies expressive desires, or, what Spiro calls, 'painful drives which seek reduction' and 'painful motives which seek satisfaction'. An example of such a painful drive or motive is hostility. Religion satisfies such painful desires by projecting, displacing, and sublimating them onto strangers, witches, neighboring tribes, devils, Satan, and other such scapegoats.

Spiro also delineates three functions of religion which correspond to the cognitive, substantive, and expressive desires which religion satisfies. These three functions are respectively: adjustive, adaptive, and integrative. According to Spiro the adjustive function is a 'real' function whereas the other two functions, adaptive and integrative, are 'apparent'. By the adjustive function

Spiro means the provision of a society with a common behavioral environment. The concept of behavioral environment was A. Irving Hallowell's major contribution to anthropology, and Spiro's use of the concept more or less echoes Hallowell's original thesis. The individual in society acts in accordance with the way in which he perceives his environment. In order for society to exist all members of that society must have similar orientations concerning the nature of the self and objective reality, and of time, space, etc. Without these common orientations interaction or social relations would be impossible. By adaptive function Spiro means the satisfaction of substantive desires which provides a basis for the stability of society. Finally the integrative function of religion is the provision of culturally approved means of resolution of inner conflict. Moreover this function provides common goals and means for the attainment of these goals for the members of a society.

Spiro's motivational approach is well developed theoretically and certainly more so than any of the other approaches offered by contemporary anthropologists. As a consequence

Spiro is able to set up hypotheses concerning religious systems from within the confines of his approach and then, stepping outside, test their validity empirically. Indeed this is the very intention behind his theoretical approach:

Holding other institutions constant, then, the kinds and intensity of drives which are satisfied by religion, the means by which they are satisfied, and the conceptions of the superhuman beings that are the agents of the satisfaction should vary with variations in childhood experiences in which drives (and their intensity) are acquired, the means by which children influenced their parents (and surrogates) to satisfy their drives, and the degree to which parents (and surrogates) do, in fact, satisfy them. (1966a, p.116)

In short, a motivational explanation of religious behavior can, in principle, explain variability in behavior and, hence, be tested empirically. (ibid., p.118)

Having elucidated Spiro's approach to the study of religion, let us now analyze it critically. There are two ways in which this will be done. First his approach will be tested empirically, and second his approach will be analyzed theoretically. In an article entitled "A Cross-Cultural Study of Some Supernatural Beliefs" (1958) .

Spiro with the aid of Roy D'Andrade attempted to test the empirical validity of the motivational approach. After enumerating the theoretical assumptions of their approach, they proposed a series of hypotheses which they wanted to test. For convenience's sake they grouped these hypotheses into six categories: 1) general religious orientation (worldly or other-worldly), 2) life after death, 3) supernatural beings, 4) ritual, 5) ethics, and 6) religious practitioners. In this particular article they only had space to publish the results of their investigations concerning the third category of hypotheses. In general their hypotheses attempted to discern the relationship between child-training (interaction between parents and child, child's image of parents, etc.) and supernatural beings (interaction between the individual and supernatural beings, individual's conception of the supernatural beings, etc.).² I shall quote several of their hypotheses below in order to give an idea of what they were attempting to prove:

Hypotheses:

1. The greater the initial satisfaction

2. This article was written eight years before Spiro decided not to 'muddy the metaphysical water' and discarded the word supernatural for superhuman.

of dependence, the greater the degree to which supernatural nurturance is contingent upon the employment of compulsive ritual....

2. The greater the initial satisfaction of the oral drive, the greater the degree to which supernatural nurturance is contingent upon the employment of compulsive ritual....
3. The greater the socialization anxiety of dependence, the greater the degree to which supernatural nurturance is contingent upon propitiatory ritual....
4. The greater the total satisfaction of all systems, the greater the degree to which supernatural nurturance is contingent upon the obedience to supernatural demands....
7. The lower the degree of initial satisfaction of all behavior systems, the greater the degree to which supernatural punishment is non-contingent.
 Rationale: It is assumed that interference by parents in early satisfaction of drives is not only perceived by the infant as punishment but, since the infant cannot understand the motive for such interference, it --- and therefore supernatural punishment --- is perceived as entirely capricious.
8. The earlier the age of socialization, the greater the degree to which supernatural punishment is viewed as non-contingent.
 Rationale: Since the child who is trained early is too young to understand the rationale for the frustrations imposed upon him, these --- and therefore supernatural punishment --- are perceived as capricious.
 (1958, p.459-461)

These hypotheses were then broken down into their components: child-training variables: oral drive, anal drive, dependence, sex, aggression, etc., and their component supernatural variables: malevolence/benevolence, capriciousness, etc. A scale was constructed for each variable.

The child-training methods and religious systems of several selected societies were then broken down and assigned apposition on each of the scales. Assuming their research method was valid within a minimum degree of error, then a quantitative correspondence between the various child-training scales (holding all other systems constant) and the supernatural scales should prove the validity of Spiro's and D'Andrade's hypotheses and hence of Spiro's approach.

Their conclusions, however, were inconclusive. The mathematical correspondence was not close enough to be convincing. The difficulties in quantifying unquantifiable variables, such as sex, aggression, and oral drives, were enormous, and in consequence the validity of the use of their scales to establish a relationship between child-training and supernatural beings is questionable. There

was no correspondence whatsoever between the two child-training variables, sex and aggression and their supernatural counterparts. This, of course, was very interesting because their theoretical approach is basically Freudian, and the two keystones of Freudian psychoanalytic theory are sex and aggression. In their conclusion they admitted that the results of their tests were very inconclusive due to difficulties in quantifying the variables. This, however, does not imply that Spiro's approach to religion is invalid in principle; rather it simply means that it would be very difficult indeed to test empirically the validity of his motivational approach.

Conceding then that Spiro's approach is quantitatively unworkable, we shall now examine how Spiro has employed his approach in interpreting field data. Most of Spiro's major field work was done in Burma over a decade ago, and since that time he has written a number of articles and one book on the subject of Burmese religions. We shall consider three of his contributions here.

In an article entitled "Religious Systems as Culturally

Constituted Defense Mechanisms" (1965) Spiro deals with the question: "if religious systems are indeed projective in character, how can we be sure that religious behavior is not abnormal behavior, requiring psychiatric rather than sociocultural analysis?" (1965, p.100)

The article begins with a methodological consideration: how is it possible to judge whether or not certain types of behavior from other cultures are abnormal? According to Spiro the two extremist viewpoints of cultural relativism and ethnocentric absolutism are fallacious, but it is possible to avoid both of these standpoints by adopting the universalistic outlook of psychology which, as a science, is neutral in cross-cultural analysis. Having thus solved to his own satisfaction the methodological dilemma underlying his inquiry, he goes on to tackle the problem quoted earlier. Drawing from an American psychologist's study of the Burmese personality,³ Spiro notes the following pathological features which are commonly found among the monks: 1) very high degree of defensiveness, 2) pathologically

3. Dr. James Steele, "Preliminary Analysis of the Burmese Rorschachs", 1963, unpublished manuscript.

regressed expression of aggressive and oral drives,
 3) cautious avoidance of emotionally laden situations,
 4) hypochondriacal self-preoccupation and erotic self-cathexis, 5) latent homosexuality, 6) above average fear of females and mother figure.

Is such behavior abnormal? Spiro thinks not. Indeed he maintains that these pathological features of the monks's behavior are latent in the very nature of Burmese society. He writes:

Monks differ from laymen, not because they have different problems, but because they have more of the same problems. The monk, in other words, is a Burmese in extremis. (ibid., p.107)

In support of his assertion concerning the normality of the behavior of the Burmese monks, Spiro distinguishes between privately and culturally constituted fantasy systems:

In the case of the schizophrenic the actor resolves his inner conflict by constructing private fantasy and action systems; in the case of the monk, however, the actor uses culturally constituted fantasy and action systems /Religion to resolve his inner conflicts. (ibid., 107)

and then he concludes:

Culturally constituted religious behavior not only is not a symptom of pathology, but, on the contrary, it serves to preclude the outbreak of pathology. The schizophrenic and the Burmese monk, alike, are characterized initially by pathogenic conflict, and schizophrenia and monasticism may each be interpreted as a means for resolving the conflict. But this is where the similarity ends. Although schizophrenia and monasticism are symptomatic of pathogenic conflict, the former represents the pathological, whereas the latter represents a non-pathological resolution of conflict. (*ibid.*, p.107)

Thus religion serves the dual function of protecting the individual from mental illness and ~~sbeial~~ punishment while at the same time protecting society from the potentially disruptive consequences of the monks's anti-social behavior.

Is Spiro's approach, which he uses here to investigate the psychopathology of religious behavior, valid? There are three points at issue. First can one label behavior cross-culturally as being either normal or abnormal? Second is it possible that religious behavior is psychopathological? Third does religion serve to resolve pathogenic conflict in a socially acceptable way? Let us take

each of these questions in turn.

In regard to the first question Spiro's methodology seems very suspect. For an anthropologist, his assumption that psychology is neutral in cross-cultural analysis is unbelievably naive. Having gone to great lengths to avoid the methodological pitfalls of normality and abnormality, Spiro immediately falls into (or rather leaps into) the pitfall of psychopathology. Nowhere does he seriously discuss this concept or offer criteria to judge whether or not certain types of behavior are psychopathological. His psychoanalytic framework is most unsettling with respect to sexuality. For example, the Burmese monks are credited with latent homosexuality. Assuming that homosexuality is a genital relationship between members of the same sex, what then is latent homosexuality? Does it involve physical attraction, affection, intimacy, effeminacy, or what? We are not told. But more important, why in the first place is latent homosexuality in the first place considered a mental disorder? Alan Watts in The Joyous Cosmology (1962) mentions that in the Western world only two

kinds of relationships between men are recognized by society: formal friendship (brotherly or spiritual love) and homosexuality (genital love), and only one of these kinds of relationship, formal friendship, is recognized as being normal:

There is no continuum between the two, and the lack of any connection, any intervening spectrum, makes spiritual love insipid and sexual love brutal. To overstep the limits of brotherly love cannot, therefore, be understood as anything but an immediate swing to its opposite pole. Thus the subtle and wonderful gradations that lie between the two are almost entirely lost. In other words, the greater part of love is a relationship which we hardly allow.... (1962, p.93)

In psychoanalytic theory relationships other than that of formal friendship are labeled as being latently homosexual and hence psychopathological, but from the perspective of Alan Watts, one could make the case that the behavior of Western preachers of normality who feel insecure or afraid of relationships outside the bounds of formal friendships exhibit serious signs of mental disorder. Moreover in non-Western cultures there may be a variety of linguistic categories differentiating relationships between members of the same sex which would make possible a number of gradations between the

two extremes of brotherly love and genital love. What is latently homosexual for the Western psychologists may not be latently homosexual for the individuals being studied. The point here is that Spiro, flying a flag of neutrality, introduces the concept of psychopathology in order to evade the biases of cultural relativism and ethnocentric absolutism. Abnormality is to be judged according to psychological rather than cultural considerations. Psychology subsumes anthropology. But this is certainly not the case. There are sound anthropological reasons why psychology as a science emerged in the Western world. Psychoanalytic theory, as developed by Freud, is deeply permeated with a Western European cultural outlook. The key concepts of psychoanalytical theory are derived from Western experience and Western languages. We could assert, therefore, that anthropology subsumes psychology. The important point here, though, is not to carry on a futile supremacist argument between the sciences but simply to state that judgments concerning the normality of behavior is as much a bugaboo for psychology as it is for anthropology. When Spiro writes that "schizophrenia and monasticism are both symptomatic of pathogenic con-

flict, the former represents the pathological, whereas the latter represents the non-pathological resolution of conflict" psychoanalytic theory and its key concept of psychopathology is anything but neutral. Rather it is deeply rooted, both historically and anthropologically, in Western experience. Contrary to Spiro, the days of a supracultural science have not yet arrived.

The second question, which concerns the psychopathology of religious behavior, is based upon the assumption that religion is a fantasy system. Indeed some religions involve beliefs in supernatural beings which from the point of view of science do not exist in reality, but there are other religions which do not seem to be fantasies. A good example here would be Buddhism, the very religion Spiro is investigating. In a recent book Spiro wrote:

Buddhism is a religion of reason. There are two senses in which this is the case. Rejecting both faith and ecstasy --- the two typical, and usually alternative, religious orientations --- its truths are to be accepted, rather, on the basis of reason (applied to experience), and its goal (nirvana) is to be attained by the intellectual process of meditation....

Contrary to Tertullian, the Buddhist is expected to believe, not because his beliefs are absurd, but because they are rational, i.e., because they can be confirmed by experience. (1967, p.260)

What then in his description of Buddhism would justify its being labeled a fantasy system? We are left in the dark. Spiro, of course, decides that religious behavior is not pathological because its fantasy system is culturally constituted rather than privately constructed. It seems here that Spiro has discovered the right answer but for the wrong reason.

Finally does religion function to resolve in a socially acceptable way pathogenic conflict? Spiro answers in the affirmative. But if he is correct, then there would be no reason for denying that other social roles function to resolve pathogenic conflict. This at least is the Freudian position. Thus carried to its logical conclusion not only monks, but also revolutionists, bureaucrats, capitalists, politicians, and I dare say university professors such as Professor Spiro resolve their own pathogenic conflicts in socially acceptable ways by fulfilling their social roles. The implication here is that

society is made up of near lunatics. Freud^{not}withstanding, this position is as absurd as its opposite --- that religion does not serve to resolve pathogenic conflict. The truth, I think, lies somewhere between these two extremes. Where Spiro is wrong is in limiting this function of resolving pathogenic conflict solely to religion.

Another article by Spiro entitled "Buddhism and Economic Action" (1966b) investigates the behavior of a people whose religion teaches that desire is the cause of all suffering. The article stands as an implicit criticism of those social scientists who attribute the slow-paced economic development of much of southern and south-eastern Asia to Buddhism which is variously described as being 'negative' and 'other-worldly'. Such social scientists, however, clearly mistake the formal religious teaching for the actual religious behavior. For example, according to Buddhism the idea of a self or soul is erroneous, and it "produces harmful thoughts of 'me' and 'mine', selfish desire, craving, attachment, hatred, ill-will, conceit, pride, egoism, and other defilements, impurities, and problems. It is the source of all the troubles in the

world from personal conflicts to wars between nations". (Walpola Rahula, 1967, p.51) This doctrine of the no-soul, or 'anatta', is often invoked to explain the supposedly curious behavior of the East. Spiro, however, in his investigation of Burmese religion discovered that:

Although almost every villager whom I interviewed had learned about anatta, less than 2% knew the meaning of this term.... How then can anatta explain any aspect of their behavior? To assume that it does because in some sense it is part of their cultural heritage is to commit. . . a culturalogical error with respect to the relationship between ideology and behavior. (1966b, p.1163-1164)

Rather in the opinion of Spiro the influence of Buddhism upon the individual is cognitive, not motivational. The average Burmese does not want to escape from samsāra, the endless cycle of birth and rebirth in this world of suffering, by attaining nirvāṇa; instead he wants to enjoy this life. Moreover, Buddhism is not as negative a religion as some Western economists think. According to the doctrine of karma, one's deeds in this life determine one's birth in the next life. By piling up heaps

of merit in this life it is possible to attain a better rebirth in the next. Thus, even though this particular life may be one of great emotional suffering, material inadequacy, and low social position, one can work towards a better future by contributing funds to support monks, by helping in the construction of a monastery, etc.

This then shifts Weber on to a new axis. Like Weber's capitalists the Burmese want to improve their station in life, but unlike the capitalists, the Burmese invest in merit rather than in production.

Spiro's summary of Burmese economic behavior is good, incisive, and worth quoting in full. He writes:

1. Religious beliefs may importantly influence social behavior even when they have not been internalized as part of the need system of actors; it is sufficient that they are part of a society's culturally constituted behavioral environment and hence a constituent element of the actor's cognitive system.

2. From their concern with monks, monasteries, and pagodas and their disproportionate expenditure of funds in them, it does not follow that the Burmese are essentially a spiritually oriented or other-worldly people; nor does it follow that these specifically religious activities are instigated primarily by 'spiritual needs' (whatever that might mean).

3. The Burmese interest in display, in feasting, and so on, does not betoken an attitude of improvidence or a lack of concern for the future, nor does it indicate an inability or unwillingness to save.

4. ...the notion that karma is an essentially negative motivational variable is a misleading half-truth.
(ibid., p.1169, 1170, 1171, 1172)

In Spiro's article "Religious Systems as Culturally Constituted Defense Mechanisms" (1965) one gets the impression that Spiro imposes his theoretical approach upon the evidence then uses this distorted evidence to justify his theoretical approach. What is most interesting about this article presently under discussion concerning the relationship between Buddhism and economic action is that to a great extent Spiro abandons his theoretical approach and stays close to the facts. As a result his article is tightly constructed; his conclusions are accurate and insightful; and his style is realistic without being cynical.

The final contribution which we shall consider here is Spiro's recent book, Burmese Supernaturalism (1967), which is an investigation into the problem of suffering.

The two questions with which the book is concerned are: 1) "what are the conditions --- cultural, social, and psychological --- that produce and maintain supernaturalism, rather than some other system which might serve the same function of explaining and resolving suffering?" and 2) "given that this supernaturalism, rather than some other system, does serve this function, what are the consequences for the other systems --- cultural, social, and psychological --- with which it interacts?" (1967, p.5)

There are two basic religions in Burma. The first which is indigenous and animistic is based upon the belief in and propitiation of 'nats'. The second which was introduced from India is Buddhism. Spiro's description of the nat cult and Buddhism need not concern us here. Let it only be said in passing, though, that Spiro's discussion of Buddhism is at times very disturbing. Burmese Buddhism is a very particular kind of Buddhism which developed out of the Hinayana tradition and is in many ways quite dissimilar to other kinds of Buddhism, such as Tibetan Buddhism and Zen, which are part of the Maha-

yana tradition. Spiro's discussion of Buddhism would have been more accurate if he had not extended his particular comments on Burmese Buddhism to include all of Buddhism. The conditions which give rise to and sustain supernaturalism also need not concern us here because they have already been discussed earlier in this chapter.

Turning now to the major theme of the book, what is the relationship between these two religions, Burmese Buddhism and the nat cults? Are they compatible or incompatible systems? In Burmese cosmology these two religions are compatible in that the imported Buddhist supernaturals, the 'devas', are classified together with the indigenous supernaturals, the nats, thereby giving Buddhist legitimacy to the nats and a folk frame of reference to the devas. On the other hand, there are arguments for the incompatibility of Burmese Buddhism and the nat cults.

The first reason which Spiro notes is doctrinal. In Buddhism whatever happens in this life is a result of one's karma. One's present existence is a consequence of all the merits and demerits accumulated from prior existences. According to the tenets of Buddhism, pro-

propitiation of the nats in order to alleviate present suffering is futile. If one's karma is bad, the nats won't be of any help. If one's karma is good, the nats are unnecessary. Spiro writes:

Note then the dilemma of the Buddhist. Should he repudiate the doctrine of karma, he not only repudiates Buddhism, but since the doctrine of karma provides him with the means for acquiring a better future, he also repudiates his only hope for avoiding future suffering. Should he, on the other hand, repudiate his belief in the causal agency of the nats and in the efficacy of nat propitiation as a means of avoiding suffering, he repudiates his only hope for resolving present suffering. (ibid., p.256)

The Burmese resolve this obvious contradiction by simply accepting both systems. Nats are propitiated to alleviate present suffering and merit is accumulated to alleviate future suffering. In regard to avoiding suffering, then, the nat cults and Buddhism are not in competition because the former is oriented toward the present and the latter toward the future. For the more introspective Burmese there is an obvious contradiction between these two religions, but for the mass of Burmese these two religions complement each other rather than compete against each other.

The second reason behind the incompatibility of the nat cults and Burmese Buddhism is their "polar opposition in ethos". According to Spiro:

Since Buddhism has as its goal the elimination of desire and, hence, of suffering, it is no accident that serenity is the characteristic of the Buddhist personality ideal. Free from passion and conflict, yet characterized by tenderness and compassion, the ideal Buddhist personality is calm, peaceful, imperturbable.... He is the very personification of sobriety, of inwardness. (*ibid.*, p.261)

Whereas:

The nats and their shamans personify the other traits. Turbulence, not serenity, is the outstanding attribute of the nat cultus. If inner peace is the prerequisite for Buddhahood, violence is the prerequisite for nat-hood. (*ibid.*, p.262)

Thus there exists a radical incompatibility between Burmese Buddhism and the nat cult with respect to value orientations and personality types. According to Spiro:

One /nat cult/ is Dionysian, the other /Buddhism/ is Apollonian; the one represents impulse, the other represents its control; one symbolizes the id, the other symbolizes the superego. (*ibid.*, p.263)

Having sorted out to what extent Burmese Buddhism and the nat cults are and are not compatible, it remains to establish their relationship in Burmese society. Have the two religions syncretized into one amorphous somewhat contradictory religion, or are the two separate and distinct? Spiro maintains that the latter case is correct. First, the Burmese themselves keep the two distinct and, indeed, do not even recognize the nat cult as a religion. Second, Spiro argues that because of their different orientations with respect to time, the two religions complement each other rather than operate as a substitute for each other. The nat cults exist "not in defiance of Buddhism but in default of Buddhism". (*ibid.*, p.271) Thus the two Burmese religions are not syncretized but separate with Buddhism asserting primacy, but not enjoying a monopoly, of the religious life of the Burmese. In conclusion, Spiro writes:

By providing the Burmese with a non-Buddhist institution for the expression of those needs that are prohibited by Buddhism, the nat cultus enables the Buddhist institutions to remain uncontaminated by them. This has the effect not only of maintaining the integrity of Buddhism, but also of strengthening it. (*ibid.*, p.279-280)

What makes Burmese Supernaturalism worthwhile is Spiro's explanation of religious action among a people with two religions. Again this is an example of Spiro's realism. If a people accept two religions then, assuming one wants to understand the religious life of these people, it is necessary to study both religions. This may sound as a piece of rather obvious common sense, but there are far too few anthropologists who have done what Spiro has done in this book. It seems that most anthropologists would prefer to avoid the necessary complications of studying at the same time two religious systems even though over two-thirds of the people on this earth live in societies with more than one religion. For example, it is difficult to gain much understanding of religious behavior from Nadel's book, Nupe Religion,² because of this point. Nadel completely avoids discussing Islam and opts instead for a traditional analysis of 'traditional' (and hence rather fictional) Nupe religion.

There is one aspect of Burmese Supernaturalism, however, which is disappointing, and that is Spiro's use of psychology. To maintain, as he does, that Buddhism symbolizes

the superego and control of the id is not only unenlightening but also grossly wrong. It is unenlightening because Freudian analysis has never really left itself to an analysis of the religious mind. It is wrong because, according to the teachings of Buddha, Buddhahood is a state of mind which goes beyond the superego. After all if Buddhahood is an other-worldly experience, it would certainly bear little reference to the superego which for Freud represents the values and morals of this world. My criticism here does not represent a confusion between religious teaching and actual religious behavior because in the section where Spiro described Buddhism as symbolizing the superego, he was talking in terms of ideal personality types, not actual personalities. It would seem that Spiro could have put his psychology to better use if he were to have abandoned these sort of remarks and instead collected case studies of particular individuals to elucidate the tension between nat cults and Buddhism. After all if there is a contradiction between these two religions with respect to doctrine and ethos, it would certainly be made most manifest in the psychologist's playground--- the mind.

Let us now return to Spiro's definition of religion as it was set out in the early pages of this chapter. Spiro's definition in terms of belief in superhuman beings is inadequate for the same reasons as stated in the previous chapter on Robin Horton. These reasons need not be restated; however, it would be worthwhile to mention the reason why Spiro accepted Tylor's definition of religion because they are different from the reasons behind Horton's acceptance of this definition. The basis for Spiro's definition is Freudian psychoanalytic theory. Supernatural beings are the projections of the child's parental (or parental surrogate) imagos. It is highly unlikely, however, that this particular theory of Freud's is valid. Certainly there has never been any adequate proof in support of it, and Spiro's attempt to establish the empirical validity of this theory, it will be remembered, failed miserably. But even if this theory were valid, it would only apply to those religions where the divine is anthropomorphised into a conception of a being. Thus his definition would exclude religions of personal liberation which transcend conceptualization altogether. Spiro tries to

railroad his definition through by relegating religions of liberation into the category of "atheistic philosophies". Most theologians, though, consider atheism to be a religion. Moreover, Spiro never bothers either to define what he means by philosophy or to inform us as to the difference between philosophy and religion. He seems to imply that philosophies are individual affairs whereas religion is necessarily tied up with the community. This implication does not seem entirely accurate. When Muhammed received the word from God, there was only one Muslim in the world, and he was Muhammed. This, however, did not make Islam at that time any less a religion.

The two criteria which Spiro employs to test the validity of his definition are cross-cultural applicability and intra-cultural intuitivity. His definition has cross-cultural applicability only in so far as it is capable of relegating religions which don't fit in with his definition into the vague and dubious category of atheistic philosophy.¹ With regard to intra-cultural intuitivity we might ask for whom the definition

is intended. If the practice of anthropology is to be open to all peoples and not restricted solely to Western man, then this criterion must be abolished. A definition which is intuitive for Spiro may not at all be intuitive for an Asian anthropologist. For an example we may return to Spiro's term "atheistic philosophy". The distinction between philosophy and religion is a Western one, and the antagonism which has existed between these two outlooks is peculiarly Western.

Heinrich Zimmer writes:

In Greece this ancient stage of Aryan belief was represented in the mythology of the Homeric age, which was continued in the tragedy of the Athenian theater. However, with the appearance of Greek philosophical criticism in Ionian Asia Minor and its development by philosophers and sophists from Thales to Socrates... the primitive, dreamlike anthropomorphic projections were withdrawn from the natural scene.

And further on he continues:

...the gods were never dethroned in India. They were not disintegrated and dissolved by criticism and natural science, as were the deities of Greece.... India retained its anthropomorphic personifications of the cosmic forces as vivid masks, magnificent celestial personae, which could serve, in an optional way, to assist the mind in its attempt to comprehend what was regarded as manifested through them. (1952, p.333-334, 342)

For an Asian anthropologist, the category of "atheistic philosophy" may be counter-intuitive because in his cultural heritage there is no distinction, as we know it, between religion and philosophy.

In summary, Spiro's Freudian framework is his major weakness. His explanation of the twin concepts, perceptual set and cognitive set is very instructive, but his labeling of these sets as fantasy systems is not. His investigation of Burmese economic action is very informative, but his consideration of religion as pathological behavior is not at all. When it came to religion, Freud was more of a polemicist than a scientist. It seems odd, then, that Spiro would want to follow Freud so unquestioningly in developing his own approach to the study of religion. The several contributions which Spiro has made to the study of religion have already been noted. They have been contributions, however, only in so far as they ignore psychoanalytic theory.

5. V.W. TURNER

Since the publication of his first book, Turner's approach to the study of religion has developed considerably. The approach in his earliest work, Schism and Continuity in an African Society (1957), is straightforward functionalism and well within the tradition established by Emile Durkheim, Radcliffe-Brown, Max Gluckman, et al. In a later work, Chihamba: The White Spirit (1962), Turner expresses some dissatisfaction with the functionalist approach to the study of religion. His publications since 1962 have, for the most part, been directed toward the development of a new approach to religion. A formal statement of this approach, however, is, to date, lacking. It would be instructive, therefore, to introduce this analysis of Turner's approach to religion by comparing his early functional approach with his later one with reference to a particular Ndembu ritual, the Chihamba.

Chihamba is a manifestation of an ancestor spirit. When angry it can cause personal misfortune, crop failure,

infertility, physical ailments, and ultimately death. The purpose of the Chihamba ritual for the Ndembu is to cure the affliction caused by the angry ancestor spirit. During several stages of the Chihamba ritual a spirit known as 'kavula' appears. kavula, unlike Chihamba, is not an ancestor spirit, but an independent spirit with its own separate origin and mode of existence. At a sacred place outside the village on the evening of the first day of the ritual an Ndembu doctor, who impersonates kavula and is screened off from the adepts and candidates, asks each candidate the purpose of his or her visit. Upon answering kavula's inquiry, the candidates are reviled and treated rudely by the Ndembu impersonator. The candidates are then given special ritual names by kavula and are led away. On the evening of the second day the candidates are brought to kavula again who this time, instead of being represented by a doctor, is represented by bowls and various other objects all covered by a white blanket. As the candidates approach kavula they are instructed to crawl on their stomachs and bang their heads upon the ground. Upon reaching

the shrine, however, each candidate is told to club kavula to death which they do by smashing the objects concealed by the white blanket. The candidates are then led away while an adept sacrifices a chicken over the demolished shrine. When the candidates return they are told that the chicken blood is the blood of kavula.

After the conclusion of the Chihamba ritual bonds of brotherhood are established between the adepts and the candidates, who by their admission into the Chihamba cult are now also considered to be adepts. But also at the end of the Chihamba ritual the incoming adepts who have just killed kavula are told that kavula is actually alive again in the form of germinating grain.

By way of background information it is necessary to state that the Ndemby of Northern Zambia reckon kinship matrilineally; however, residence is virilocal. These two somewhat contradictory principles of social organization are a source of constant social conflict and personal tension for the ndemba. Families become divided. Villages, torn by factional conflict, eventually fissure into two or more separate villages. Chihamba adepts,

however, are not recruited through the lineage system. Their bonds of brotherhood form cross-cutting ties thereby linking otherwise dissident groups and individuals. Turner's early functional approach analyzes and interprets the Chihamba ritual solely in terms of its "social effects". The particular social effects of the Chihamba are: reduction of interpersonal hostility, establishment of ties of cooperation between opposing factions within the village, source of prestige for the village performing the ritual, opportunity for re-assertion of friendly relations with nearby villages, restatement of the values of the Ndembu people, and alternative source of prestige for those individuals with limited authority. In sum, Turner writes:

Ritual for the Ndembu is closely associated with breaches in social regularities and their redress. It is not so much a buttress or auxiliary of secular social regularities as a means of restating, time and again, a group unity which transcends, but to some extent rests on and proceeds out of, the mobility and conflicts of its component elements.
(1957, p.316)

Several years after writing Schism and Continuity in an African Society Turner realized the inadequacy of the

functional explanation of religion. He rejected functionalism for three reasons. First, ritual may restate the unity of society and serve to ^tintegrate society, but this tells us more about society than about religion. Second, functionalism is not able "to handle the complexity, asymmetry, and antimony which characterizes real social processes, of which ritual performances may be said to constitute phases or stages". (1962a, p.86-87) For example, it is impossible to explain adequately kavula's death and rebirth as well as his association with thunder, lightning, and germinating grain in terms of social effects. Third, by analyzing religion in terms of social effects the distinction between the sacred and the secular is obliterated. Turner does not, though, advocate scrapping functionalism, nor does he seem to advocate its general overhaul. Functionalism is not so much wrong as it is limited. To employ functionalism beyond its limits of explanation is to misuse it, and the misuses of functionalism are particularly apparent with regard to the study of religion. Turner then sets about to devise an approach which can handle the complexities of ritual action.

Having not ~~yet~~ formalized his approach in the way that Horton and Spiro have done, it is necessary to piece together his approach from the numerous articles which he has written on Ndembu ritual. To do this let us return to his discussion of kavula. Granted that functionalism cannot explain the complexities of the kavula spirit, what can? Turner writes:

What the Ndembu are trying to do, when they use this profound symbol and attempt to interpret it, is to express the act-of-being itself (esse) rather than the concept of being (id quod est). For, as Etienne Gilson writes in his book on Aquinas, 'it is quite impossible to come to the act-of-being by an intellectual intuition which grasps it directly and grasps nothing more. To think is to conceive. But the proper object of a concept is always an essence; in brief, an object. An act-of-being is an act. It can only be grasped by or in the essence whose act it is. A pure est is unthinkable; but an id quod est can be thought. But every id quod est is first a being!' (1962a, p. 82)

Turner does not offer a definition of religion, but he implies that the distinguishing characteristic of religion is act-of-being, or the aspiration to experience and express being. Because concept of being is something intellectualized, we may suppose that it corresponds

roughly to religious knowledge and belief. Since being can only be experienced in action then we can expect it to be expressed and experienced in ritual action. This at least is the inference from Turner's general handling of Ndembu religion in terms of Gilson's neo-

Thomism:

A nuclear symbol or a symbolic personality like kavula, is an inexhaustible matrix of concepts, a fount of definitions. Its dynamic wealth is inexhaustible, precisely because such a symbol is an attempt to give visible form to the invisible act-of-being. Here, too, we find the inner significance of the semantic cluster of Ndembu terms associated with the verb kusolola, 'to reveal', 'to make visible'. It is no accident that the supreme representation of kavula takes place in an isoli, 'a place of revelation', near musoli, 'a revelatory tree'. (ibid., p.82)

This then gives a general idea what Turner means by religion. With respect to the relationship between religion and society Turner writes:

...Ndembu religion has its own sets of ends, which clearly transcend the social category.... Many kinds of repetitive social behavior and many kinds of natural regularity are associated with the kavula, but what he has in himself transcends all these and yet is immanent in all of them. Each of these regularities has its own formal principle. None of them can be re-

duded to or substituted for any other. But they share a common act-of-being, a ver esse. To say that everything represented by or personified in kavula is something that has a bearing on the social life of the Ndembu is to say very little... There is here no necessary causal nexus between the social and ritual structures. The latter is certainly not monocausally determined by the former. (ibid., p.83)

Since religion is to be studied as something in and of itself, Turner suggest that it may be useful to employ the concept of "ritual man" in religious analysis. Ritual man is defined as a human being with a "sense of dependence on a primary act-of-being, whether this act-of-being is regarded as personal or not".

(ibid., p.84) The concept of ritualman would provide the anthropology of religion with a theoretical tool analogous to 'economic man' in economic anthropology and 'reasonable man' in legal anthropology. There may be some anthropologists who would question the validity or universality of ritual man but according to Turner such scholars question thusly because they "seek to destroy that which centrally menaces and wounds their self-sufficiency". (ibid., p.91) This allegation may contain more than a grain of truth, but as a defense

of one's own theories it is a bit too novel and beside the point. The validity of the concept of ritual man should be established by its usefulness. Does it work? In this regard it is interesting to note that Turner has made absolutely no use of this concept in any of his subsequent analyses of religious processes.

Let us return now to a previous quotation from Turner's Chikamba: The White Spirit to pick up another thread from his argument. Religious phenomena are to be explained in terms of religious ideas. They cannot be reduced to or explained by any other non-religious phenomena although there may be relationships between religious and social or secular phenomena. Investigations of religious systems center necessarily upon belief and ritual. Of course, these two aspects of any religion are interrelated. Beliefs may proscribe certain rituals, and rituals contain certain messages concerning belief. Turner concentrates almost exclusively upon ritual although at times this does take him into a discussion of belief. How then should we go about studying ritual action? By ritual Turner means "prescribed formal be-

havior for occasions not given over to technological routine, having reference to beliefs in mythical (or non-empirical) beings or powers". (1968, p.15) The smallest unit of ritual which contains the specific qualities of ritual action is the symbol. Symbol is defined by Turner as "a thing regarded by general consent as naturally typifying or representing or recalling something by possession of analogous qualities or by association in fact or thought". (1962b, p.20) Objects, action, interaction, as well as units of space may all serve as symbols. Each symbol may contain any number of messages. The task of the anthropologist is to grasp the meaning of the various messagege contained in a symbol. This involves not only an investigation of symbols in isolation but also in what ways a particular symbol is used in different rituals as well as the relationships between various symbols in a particular ritual. A thorough understanding of a people's language, mythology, cosmology, history, and theology is requisite for this task because "the central approach to the problem of ritual has to be an intuitive one, although the initial intuition may then be developed in a logical series of

concepts". (1962a, p.86-87)

Turner begins his investigation of ritual in Chikamba: The White Spirit with an intellectual debt to the work of Susanne Langer in the field of symbolism. Langer discusses three aspects of meaning (signification, denotation, and connotation) with reference to four aspects of the symbol function: subject, symbol, conception, and object. We shall pass over this, however, for reasons which will be mentioned later. Except for the influence of Langer and a dabbling in aspects of Jungian and Freudian psychology, most of Turner's approach represents an attempt to work out an instructive way of studying ritual based upon personal experience in the field.

Turner's first step in constructing an approach was to subclassify different aspects of rituals and symbols. He observed that ritual action exhibited four basic interrelated structures. These are symbolic structure, value (or ideological) structure, telic structure, and role structure. Each of these structures must be investigated. The symbolic structure tells us about symbols as storage units of information and gives us the meaning

of the symbols used in a particular ritual. An inquiry into the ideological structure informs us as to what kinds of information are being transmitted by the symbols. This information contains the values of the believing community. The telic structure concerns the aims of and the dramatic relationship between the various symbols in each phase of a ritual. The telic structure is composed of dominant and instrumental symbols. Dominant symbols are the crucial symbols around which a ritual is built; instrumental symbols lead up to and contribute to the meaning expressed in dominant symbols. Finally the role structure tells us about the symbolic action and interaction of the participants of the ritual as well as the relationship between particular ritual roles and the roles which these actors perform in secular life.

Having delineated the various structures of a ritual let us focus our attention upon Turner's investigation of symbols and meaning. There are three sources of meaning in each symbol. These sources are nominal, substantial (physical and biological characteristics),

and artifactual. This line of approach stands as an implicit criticism of the French sociologists who follow Durkheim in asserting that society is the basis of symbolic classification. As Turner demonstrates experience of one's own physical being may as well provide a basis for classification of reality. The Ndembu color classification which is based upon products of the human body exemplifies this. (Turner, 1966)

Having distinguished three sources of meaning in symbols, Turner continues by distinguishing three levels of meaning with respect to a symbol's use. These are:

1. Its /symbol's/ manifest sense(s), of which the subject is fully conscious and which is (are) related to the explicit aims of the ritual. /For example, to hasten the rainy season, to cure sterility, etc./
2. Its latent sense(s), of which the subject is only marginally aware but could become fully aware and which is (are) related to other ritual and pragmatic contexts of social action.
3. Its hidden sense(s), of which the subject is completely unconscious and which is (are) related to infantile (and possibly pre-natal) experiences shared with most other members of his society and perhaps with most other human beings. (1962a, p.79)

of these three levels few anthropologists would object to Turner's acceptance of the manifest meaning of ritual symbols although Leach might contend that things are not what they seem to be. Several anthropologists who have contributed to the study of ritual, such as S.F. Nadel and Monica Wilson, would not, however, agree with Turner with regard to the latent meaning of a symbol. These anthropologists contend that symbols which are comprehended by the participants are irrelevant for social analysis. Turner would counter this charge by citing C.G. Jung's distinction between a symbol and a sign. A sign according to Jung is "an analogous or abbreviated expression of a known thing" whereas a symbol is the "best possible expression of a relatively unknown fact". The meaning of some symbols, such as kavula, are beyond articulate, logical, conscious expression. That is why kavula is a symbol rather than a sign. To ignore latent meanings of kavula would result in an impoverished analysis of ritual symbolism. Thus Turner contends that interpretation of the latent meanings of a symbol is legitimately within the realm of anthro-

pological inquiry. With regard to the third level of meaning few social anthropologists, if any, would be in support of Turner. Turner here is somewhat under the influence of Jungian psychology, and presumably there are numerous anthropologists as well as many psychologists who would take issue with the tenets of Jungian psychology. Moreover, most anthropologists would consider psychological considerations to lie outside the scope of anthropological analysis.

Turner continues his classification of ritual action by listing three properties of ritual symbols. The first property is condensation. Symbols synthesize under one rubric many objects, emotions, and actions. The second property is that ritual symbols unify disparate significata by common possession of analogous qualities or by association in thought. For example, the muddyi tree in Ndembuland which secretes a white latex when wounded has come to stand for women's breasts, motherhood, the matrilineal principle, particular matrilineages, and the unity and welfare of the Ndembu people. Third, ritual symbols possess two poles of meaning.

Turner calls these two poles ideological and sensory. At the ideological pole are clustered significata referring to the valuational, moral, and social order of a people. At the sensory pole are clustered natural and physiological phenomena. With reference to the mudgi tree the meaning of woman's breasts would be at the sensory pole whereas the meaning of the matrilineal principle would be at the ideological pole. The sensory pole provides the emotional content for a symbol; the ideological pole provides the value content. The combination of these two poles explains the power of a symbol. Turner writes:

...the ritual symbol...effects an interchange of qualities between its poles of meaning. Norms and values, on the one hand, become saturated with emotion, while the gross and basic emotions become ennobled through contact with social values. The irksomeness of moral constraint is transformed into the love of virtue (1962b, p.32)

Having elucidated the meaning of ritual we can speak of the functions of ritual. First ritual restates the way in which a particular people must interact if there is going to be any stability and continuity to social life. Second, ritual "creates, or re-creates, the cat-

egories through which men perceive reality --- the axioms underlying the structure of society and the laws of the natural and moral orders". (1968, p.7)

With this function, though, ritual is never completely successful because often a people have several somewhat contradictory models. In other words this function operates successfully only in so far as the socio-cultural models of a people are well-integrated.

Third, citing Freud, Turner states that ritual (and religion in general) "is an attempt to get control of the sensory world, in which we are placed, by means of the wish world, which we have developed inside us as a result of biological and psychological necessities". (ibid., p.21)

By way of Freud, then, Turner shifts his emphasis from the social to the personal functions of ritual. Underlying this wish for harmony is the emotional need of economic and social security. In performing a ritual the participant can "pretend" that the real world conforms with his wish world.

Departing from Freud, however, Turner writes that:

... 'the wish to gain control of the sensory world' may proceed from something else --- a deep intuition of a

real and spiritual unity in all things. It may be a wish to overcome the arbitrary and man-made divisions, to overcome for a moment --- a 'moment in and out of time' --- the material conditions that disunite men and set them at odds with nature. (ibid., p.21-22)

Let us now go back over Turner's approach to religion and analyze it critically. It is to be remembered that Turner does not define religion although he does imply in several passages that religion is (a) belief in mystical (or non-empirical) beings and powers, and (b) concept and act-of-being. The first definition we will not consider here. As a type of definition, viz., belief in a particular class of objects, it has been previously analyzed and found to be unsatisfactory. Therefore let us focus our attention upon 'being'. In order to determine the validity of this definition it would be necessary to examine critically Thomist-Aristotelian philosophy from which Turner's definition is derived. Such a task, however, would intricate us in a lengthy philosophical argument somewhat beyond the purposes of this particular critique of Turner's approach. Instead we can examine the usefulness of 'being' as

a definition for the social sciences. With regard to Turner's definition of religion as 'being', then, we can with confidence state one thing --- it is very ambiguous. Religion is the unknown term. Being leaves us blank. We are now in need of a definition of our definition. But by definition we cannot define being, for as Turner maintains language is ineffectual in describing or categorizing the realm of being. Thus the criterion we have by which we may recognize being is that it cannot be circumscribed by language. This criterion, however, is only a necessary one and not sufficient for our understanding of what being is because numerous sentiments and perceptions are also incapable of conceptual expression. Thus we are left without sufficient means of distinguishing being from non-being, or religious action from secular action. As a particular theological interpretation of god, 'being' may be apt, but as a definition of religion it fails on two counts. First, it is much too ambiguous. Second, it does not help us to differentiate religious action from secular action. Hence as a theoretical tool for the social sciences 'being' is practically useless.

Let us now turn to another theoretical source of Turner's approach. He refers to Susanne Langer's theory that meaning has three aspects: signification, denotation, and connotation. Quoting Turner's summary of Langer:

Signification is concerned with the relation between a symbol (or sign) and its object. The two terms, symbol and object, would be interchangeable, were it not for the subject for whom they constitute a pair.... Denotation is 'the complex relationship which a name has to an object which bears it'. Proper names are the best instances of denotation.... There is a very close relation here between conceptions and the concrete world. The more direct relation of the name, or symbol, to its associated concept is its connotation. The connotation of a word is the concept it conveys. (1962a, p.71)

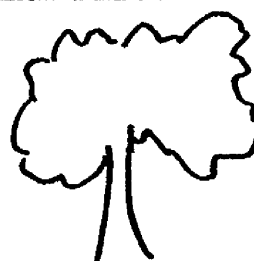
Recent work in linguistics, however, has done much to reveal the naivete of theories such as Langer's. Modern linguists distinguish between the signifier (that which is signifying) and the signified (that which is being signified by the signifier). This distinction can be crudely illustrated by the following equation:

signifier

tree

::

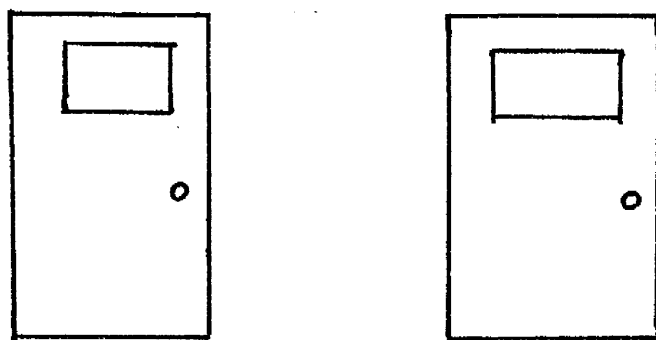
signified



Langer's thesis that the signifier represents the signified is grossly inaccurate. This can be demonstrated by the following equation which was originally proposed by Jacques Lacan:

LADIES

GENTLEMEN



(Structuralism, (1966), p.118-120)

In other words meaning exists through the relationship between signifiers and not through any relationship between signifier and signified. Furthermore:

...no meaning is sustained by anything other than reference to another meaning;
 ...should we try to grasp in the realm of the language the constitution of an object, how can we help but notice that

the object is to be found only at the level of the concept, a very different thing from the simple nominative. (ibid., 116)

The third of Turner's debts is to the psychologists, Jung and Freud. From Jung Turner borrowed the idea that some symbols may originate in pre-natal experience, and thus they are universal symbols of the collective unconscious. Of all of Jung's contributions to psychology his theory of the collective unconscious has met with the least acceptance by his colleagues. Furthermore from the anthropological perspective there are too many exceptions to the theory that the unconscious has a universal content. As Levi-Strauss has shown, an archetype such as the sun in some tribes symbolizes a cannibal eating monster while in other tribes it symbolizes the father. For this reason the structuralists have sought universals in the structure rather than the content of the mind. (Levi-Strauss, 1966, p.65) From Freud Turner borrowed the division of the world into that which is real and that which is wished. The wish world is built up as a result of childhood experience.

In ritual the participants can 'pretend' that the real world conforms to their wish world. This particular interpretation of ritual is based upon the nineteenth century view that rituals were intended to be physically efficacious. The modern view, however, as espoused by Mary Douglas, Godfrey Lienhardt, and indeed even Turner in places, is that rituals are an ordering of one's experience. Ritual restates the categories through which men perceive and organize their experience. In this way then ritual is not so much intended to be physically efficacious as it is intended to be mentally efficacious. To be sure, primitive people wish that there will be enough rain to water the crops, that illnesses will be cured, that men of the same village will live together in harmony, but these wishes are periphery for the anthropological understanding of ritual.

Turner's debts to Aquinas, Gilson, Langer, Jung, and Freud, however, seem more like attempts by Turner to appendage theory onto the facts rather than to develop his own theories from the field data which he has collected on the Ndembu. For this reason it is possible to

disagree with much of Turner's theoretical framework yet still accept the general validity of his approach. Turner's chief contributions to the anthropological approach to the study of religion have been threefold. First, he has developed a set of practical guidelines for the investigation of ritual action and ritual symbolism which would be of great use for the anthropologist in the field. Second, he has consistently maintained an attitude of openness to the possibilities of meaning in primitive religion. It is this attitude which enabled him to discover that primitive religions may be as metaphysically subtle as the so-called great, or universal, religions. Third, he has contributed to ~~the~~ our understanding of the complexities of symbols and their meaning, and thus he has deepened our knowledge of the nature of religion.

6. CLAUDE LEVI-STRAUSS

Levi-Strauss has yet to deal systematically with religion as it is generally understood; however, the implications of his structural approach for the study of religion are so great that it would be impossible to conclude this section on contemporary religious anthropology without some consideration of the theories of Levi-Strauss. He doesn't offer a definition of religion, but from his writings we can piece together the general meaning which he attaches to religion. In his earlier works he has stated that religion refers to social phenomena with reference to the supernatural. This is evident in some of his essays from Structural Anthropology (1963), such as his interpretation of shamanism among the Cuna Indians of Panama. Religion defined with reference to the supernatural appears also in his essay entitled "Social Structure" which was written in 1952 for an international symposium of anthropologists:

All the models considered so far /kinship, economic, political, etc./, however, are 'lived-in' orders: they correspond to mechanisms which can be studied from the outside as a part of the objective reality. But no systematic studies of these orders can be undertaken without acknowledging

the fact that social groups, to achieve their mutual ordering, need to call upon orders of different types, corresponding to a field external to objective reality and which we call the supernatural. These 'thought-of' orders cannot be checked against the experience to which they refer since they are one and the same thing as this experience. Therefore we are only in the position of studying them in their relationships with the other types of 'lived-in' orders. The 'thought-of' orders are those of myth and religion. (1952, p. 28)

In light of the writings of Collingwood and Whitehead we might question seriously Levi-Strauss' use of the concept objective reality. We might also demand some elucidation of this 'need' for the supernatural which he posits as part of human nature. Furthermore Horton's approach in terms of the interaction between the gods and human beings would protest the inclusion of religion in the category of 'thought-of order'. For Horton religion is as much 'thought-of' as it is 'lived-in'. But for the time being these criticisms are beside the point. What is important for our purposes is that Levi-Strauss identifies religion with the supernatural. Unfortunately he lists both myth and religion as 'thought-of' orders without distinguishing between the

two. Is myth an aspect of religion or is it a 'thought-of' order with its own points of reference?

Further elucidation of what Levi-Strauss means by the supernatural is provided in The Savage Mind (1966).

Criticizing the views of earlier anthropologists who treated magic and religion as different stages of human evolution, he writes:

The anthropomorphism of nature (of which religion consists) and the physiomorphism of man (by which we defined magic) constitute two components which are always given, and vary only in proportion... There is no religion without magic any more than there is magic without at least a trace of religion. The notion of a supernature exists only for a humanity which attributes supernatural powers to itself and in return ascribes the powers of its superhumanity to nature. (1966, p.221)

From this and his earlier discussion of religion (see ibid., p.220) we gather that religion is a projective system. In order to interpret his universe primitive man not only attributed his actions and will to natural phenomena but also attributed the forces of nature to his own actions. This man, then, in whom the forces of nature have been internalized 'is externalized' by man and by projection served to 'shape' the gods. Unfortun-

ately we do not know whether Levi-Strauss considers the anthropomorphism of nature to be one aspect of religion or whether anthropomorphism of nature is what we know of as religion. If the latter case is correct, then religion is more or less confined to animism, polytheism, and monotheism and would seem to be definitely within a historical setting. Contemporary religious thought in the Western world by such theologians as Teilhard de Chardin and Dietrich Bonhoeffer would seem to fall outside Levi-Strauss definition of religion. Indeed this may be the meaning he intends, for in "social structure" he suggests that political ideologies are the functional equivalents of religion and myth in contemporary Western civilization. If the former case is correct, though, then the anthropomorphism of nature is just one of the defining characteristics of religion. But as we have already stated in the earlier discussion on neo-Tylorian theories of religion, supernatural and superhumanity may be an aspect of some religions, but it is certainly not the defining characteristic of religion in a universal sense.

Thus there must be something else needed to distinguish religious from secular phenomena.

This problem, which is a stumbling block for the neo-Tylorian approaches to the study of religion, by a redefinition of his aims ceases to have any relevance for Levi-Strauss. It is to be remembered that religion and myth are 'thought-of' orders and politics, kinship, economics, etc., are 'lived-in' orders. Levi-Strauss originally made this distinction in order to state that the task of future anthropological research into religion was to discern the relationships between different types of 'thought-of' orders (religions) and different types of 'lived-in' orders (or the social structure as a whole). This in so many words is a restatement without modification of the position of Radcliffe-Brown in his essay "Religion and Society" (Henry Myers Lecture, 1945). In 1962, however, with the publication of Le Totémisme Aujourd'hui Levi-Strauss takes a significant turn of approach. The aim of religious anthropology as initially stated in this book and later confirmed in The Savage Mind (1966) is not so much to treat religion

as a phenomenon with its own unique set of distinguishing characteristics but rather to abolish religion as it is normally thought of. He writes:

If it is maintained that religion constitutes an autonomous order, requiring a special kind of investigation, it has to be removed from the common fate of objects of science. Religion having thus been defined by contrast, it will inevitably appear, in the eyes of science, to be distinguished as no more than a sphere of confused ideas. Thenceforth any attempt to make an objective study of religion will have to be directed to a domain other than that of ideas, one which has been distorted and adapted by the claims of religious anthropology. The only approach routes left open will be the affective (if not actually organic) and sociological ones which will do no more than circle around the phenomena.

Conversely, if religious ideas are accorded the same value as any other conceptual system, as giving access to the mechanism of thought, the procedure of religious anthropology will acquire validity, but will lose its autonomy and its specific character.
(1962, p.103-104)

This then is the reason why it is so difficult to pin the structuralists down to what they mean by religion. It makes no difference if we are unable to distinguish religious from secular phenomena because the relevant distinction is between 'lived-in' and 'thought-of' rather than religion and secular. The intention of the

structuralist is to investigate cognitive systems of which religion surely is one type. Furthermore affective and functional theories of religion which have dominated the social anthropological tradition are discarded by Levi-Strauss. He admits that sentiments are part of religion, but these are only relevant in "a subsidiary fashion, as responses of a body of ideas to gaps and lesions which it can never succeed in closing". (*ibid.*, p.104) Functional theories of religion are inadequate because they do not inform us of the meaning of religion, or what Levi-Strauss calls the 'interior logic' of religion. Functional theories are only capable of explaining the results, real and imaginary, of religion. (1968, p.32)

In other words, they tell us what religion does and not what religion is. In sum, then, if one accepts the structuralist position that religion is basically a cognitive system, then we can anticipate that structuralism will tell us something of the nature of religion. If, however, one considers religion to be an affective and motivational system as well as a cognitive system, then we can anticipate that the structuralist explanation of religion will be somewhat limited in perspective.

Leaving aside for the time being this question whether or not religion is solely or partially a cognitive system, let us examine what Levi-Strauss has written concerning cognitive systems. Underlying his approach are two assumptions concerning the nature of the mind. These are: 1) "the unconscious activity of the mind consists in imposing form upon content" and 2) "these forms are fundamentally the same for all minds --- ancient and modern, primitive and civilized ----" (1963, p.21) His approach then can be quite simply stated. Given these assumptions then "it is necessary and sufficient to grasp the unconscious structure underlying each institution and each custom, in order to obtain a principle of interpretation valid for other institutions and other customs, provided of course the analysis is carried far enough." (ibid., p.21) The content of the conscious mind is derived from two sources: human beings living together and the natural world. The structure of the unconscious mind is by assumption universal for all humanity and not derivative of anything else. Rather than analyzing nature and culture in order to gain insights into the mind,

Levi-Strauss attempts to discern the structure of the mind in order to gain insights into the worlds of nature and culture. If one is able to interpret and integrate the content of nature and culture with this code, then that would tend to prove the correctness of the code thus reaffirming one's original hypotheses concerning the structure of the mind. Our problem then is simply to crack the code.

Some may suggest that the clue to the code lies with the conscious models which a people have of their social order. This path, however, Levi-Strauss rejects because conscious models exist as "reinterpretations" or "rationalization" of the social order. They are designed to perpetuate the social order rather than explain its interior logic. For Levi-Strauss a more fruitful inspiration comes from the works of Roman Jakobson in structural linguistics. Jakobson proposed that all articulatory distinctive features of language may be classed in terms of binary opposition. Jakobson writes that "a set of binary selection is inherent in the communication process itself as a constraint imposed by the code on the speech event,

who could be spoken of as the encoder and the decoder". (Scheffler, 1966, p.71) Not only does the evidence seem to suggest that we discriminate sounds according to two-valued dimensions of opposition but it also seems that bipolar opposition is logically the most efficient way of discriminating sounds. Jakobson's theory was concerned with phonemics. Levi-Strauss applies Jakobson to semantics. He writes:

Obviously there exists here some kind of similarity with linguistics, since language is also a code which, through oppositions between differences, permits us to convey meanings and since... the complete series of empirical media provided in one case by verbal articulation, and in the other by the entire wealth of the biological world, cannot be called upon, but rather a few elements which each language or each culture selects in order that they can be organized in stringly and unequivocally contrasting pairs. (1963, p.2)

From this analogy with phonemics Levi-Strauss concludes that binary opposition is the way in which the mind is constrained to operate. Binary opposition is the code which will enable us to interpret man's attempt to integrate the worlds of nature and culture.

Levi-Strauss has applied his approach to three topics

which traditionally fall within the scope of religious anthropology: totemism, caste, and myth. Although Levi-Strauss' contributions to structuralism have been rather extensive and intricate, still it is possible to state in quite simple terms the basic outlines of his approach. Let us then examine each of these three topics in order to understand more fully the structural approach to the study of religion as espoused by Levi-Strauss.

Totemism:

1. The anthropological inquiry into totemism has traditionally centered upon finding a satisfactory answer to the question: "how may it be explained that social groups, or segments of society, should be distinguished from each other by the association of each with a particular natural species?" (1962, p.85)

2. Traditional attempts to answer this question have focused upon the relationship between the totemic species and the social group. None of these solutions are valid. Naturalistic theories were the result of nineteenth century European efforts to place as much distance as possible between so-called primitive and civilized men.

Utilitarian theories are inadequate because numerous totemic objects, such as vomit, spittle, etc., do not seem to be of any utilitarian value. Affective theories explain only the consequences and not the cause of the totemic relationship.

3. The structuralist approach maintains that nature and culture are two conceptual systems between which there is a formal analogy. Investigations of totemism must not begin with the resemblances between the social group and the natural object, but with the resemblances between the differences within each of these two orders. Totemic objects comprise the code which enable men to pass from one system of differences to the other. (1966, p.116)

4. Totemism was originally classified as a religion because of Western man's obsession with religious questions. The structuralist explanation, however, demonstrates that totemism is "no more than a particular expression... of correlations and oppositions" which is itself one way "of formulating a general human problem, viz., how to make opposition, instead of being an obstacle to integration, serve rather to produce it". Thus instead

of being a religion totemism is simply an illustration of a particular mode of thought. "Natural species are chosen as totemic objects not because they are 'good to eat' but because they are 'good to think!'" (1962, p.89)

5. For Levi-Strauss the central problem of anthropology is the passage of man from nature to culture and the way in which the human mind mediates between these two orders. The structuralist explanation of totemism gives us insights into the nature of this relationship. However at this point of the discussion Levi-Strauss is very ambivalent. Concerning the passage of man from nature to culture he has written : (a) the differences between animals are "extracted from nature" in order "to create differences within society" (1966, p.107-108), (b) differentiation of the natural and social worlds arose simultaneously (1964, p. 101), and (c) nature is continuous; language (culture) is discontinuous. Differentiation of the natural world resulted from the imposition of the human intellect upon nature creating a natural order of differences and similarities. (1966, p.1-34)

Caste Systems:

1. Castes are endogamous social groups which are heterogenous in function. Goods and services (cultural objects) are exchanged between these groups, but women are not because they are thought to differ from caste to caste. Thus the caste system as a cultural model of diversity must postulate that women of different castes are naturally heterogenous.

2. "The exchange of women not only ensures a horizontal mediation between groups of men, it also ensures a mediation, which we might call vertical, between nature and culture". (1963b, p.10) By analyzing social structures in terms of the ways in which women are exchanged we can discover that an inverted symmetry exists between caste systems and totemic systems. "Castes are defined after a cultural model and must define their matrimonial exchange after a natural model. Totemic groups pattern matrimonial exchange after a cultural model, and they themselves must be defined after a natural model. (ibid., p.9)

3. Thus we observe that both castes and totemic systems postulate resemblances between natural and cultural

differences. At the general level then caste and totemic systems are not autonomous institutions restricted to certain parts of the world but rather 'modus operandi' of the structure of society.

Myth:

1. Traditional interpretations of myth have related myth to social structure (Malinowski, M. Wilson, et al) or to the collective psyche of a people or of mankind in general (C.G. Jung) or to man's attempt to understand the natural world and the origin and structure of the cosmos (Nature-myth school, Edward Tylor, et al). None of these traditional approaches is particularly capable of explaining myth as a mode of thought.

2. Mythic thought is a particular form of communication. As is the case with other related communication systems, such as language, myth possesses an unconscious structure. The meaning of a myth does not rest with the "isolated elements which enter into the composition of a myth, but only in the way those elements are combined". (1963a, p.210) The structuralist approach analyzes myth in terms of the structuring of these elements.

In other words, the structuralist's concern is to demonstrate "how the myths think themselves out in men and without men's knowledge" (1964, p.56).

3. As is the case with linguistics, the mythic structure proceeds by binary opposition. In a myth two categories in opposition are mediated by a third category which in turn produces another opposition which is mediated and so on....

4. The growth or development of a myth is a continuous process, but its structure always remains discontinuous in terms of binary opposition.

5. Human experience of reality is contradictory: life and death, creating nature and destroying nature, freedom and constraint. Furthermore human experience of social reality is contradictory. For example in some tribes matrilineal kinship conflicts with virilocal marriage, and so on. The purpose of myth is to draw from these oppositions in our experience and to restate, modify, and sometimes resolve them. In Levi-Strauss' words "the purpose of myth is to provide a logical model capable of overcoming contradiction". (1963a, p.229)

Thus stated, cognitive systems of both primitive as well as civilized, ancient as well as modern peoples are systems of meaning built up by oppositions in an effort to gain understanding of reality which we have in.

Levi-Strauss writes:

...the dialectic of superstructures, like that of language, consists in setting up constitutive units (which, for this purpose, have to be defined unequivocally, that is by contrasting them in pairs) so as to be able by means of them to elaborate a system which plays the part of a synthesizing operator between ideas and facts, thereby turning the latter into signs. The mind thus passes from empirical diversity to conceptual simplicity and from conceptual simplicity to meaningful synthesis. (1966, p.131)

Having outlined in somewhat abbreviated fashion the contributions of Levi-Strauss to the study of religion, let us determine in what ways his approach is or is not fruitful for our understanding of religion. There is no need to discuss again definitions of religion in terms of the supernatural. Besides it is not at all certain whether Levi-Strauss would still hold to such a definition. In his later works religion is treated as just one type of cognitive system, and as a cognitive system, it "proceeds through understanding, not affectivity, with the aid of distinctions and oppositions". (1966,

Religion as a separate topic for inquiry is abolished. This in itself may not be such a bad idea. For too long too many anthropologists have treated religion as an illusory, irrational, or esoteric corner of culture. An investigation of religion in terms of human understanding of experience or in terms of 'meaningful synthesis' of 'empirical diversity' might very well be a more fruitful line of approach.

Levi-Strauss, however, not only abolishes religion as a separate topic for inquiry; he also abolishes religion as it is generally known. The result of this is that we are no longer able to recognize religion as religion. Caste systems are analyzed without any reference to pollution ideology. Totemism is reduced to a mode of thinking. The nature of the totemic relationships between man and the species is ignored. In his analysis of primitive world views there is no power in the universe. The point here is not that Levi-Strauss misinterprets these essential aspects of religious systems (e.g. pollution ideology, man/spirit relationships, cosmic energy, etc.), but that these things are entirely absent

from his analysis. Levi-Strauss is able to analyze religion solely as a cognitive system only at the cost of emasculating religion.

Let us turn now to Levi-Strauss' theory of cognitive systems. Pervading his entire analysis of myth, totemism, and caste is the assumption that the mind is constrained to operate in terms of binary opposition. There is no psychological evidence invoked to support this assumption; rather its validity is asserted on logical and analogical grounds. Neither of these two justifications seem especially valid. The first states that thought proceeds by discrimination. Binary opposition is the most efficient means of discrimination. Therefore binary opposition is the way in which the mind is constrained to operate. This, however, does not follow. Binary opposition may be the most efficient *modus operandi*, but it does not necessarily mean that, because of this, binary opposition is the way in which the mind operates let alone the way in which the mind is constrained to operate. The phonetic structure of the Yoruba and Vietnamese languages may proceed by pairs of articulated sound in opposition,

but tonally these languages operate with trinary and pentary discrimination respectively. Thus the mind does not seem to be constrained to operate solely by binary opposition. Moreover, in the case of a tonal language we can see that the mind is capable of operating through different degrees of opposition all at the same time.

We may also admit the possibility that during some kinds of mental activity, such as trances or drug induced states of consciousness, the mind may not even actively discriminate at all. Thus to [^]conceive of the mind as operating solely by opposition at all levels of consciousness would be inaccurate. Admittedly these are only possibilities. From the way, however, in which Levi-Strauss' interpretations of myths often seem forced by placing categories into opposition which do not really seem to oppose each other, we may at least entertain this possibility that the mind need not operate solely by binary opposition.

The second justification states that the mind operates by bipolar opposition by analogy with the phonemic structure. There is, however, no justification for assuming that all levels of communication are structured in terms of binary opposition even if the phonemic level

is so structured. We might just as well posit that the moon is made of cream cheese because the moon is white, it is made of cream cheese. If the semantic structure tends toward bipolarity, then the reasons for this must be sought in the semantic structure itself. As Dilthey and others have suggested, thought and consciousness develop by discriminations. Furthermore as was stated in the preceding chapter, signifiers acquire meaning only in relation to other signifiers. In other words thought is discriminatory and relational. Thus cognitive systems are characterized by polarity. Perhaps bipolarity is the most common form of cognitive polarity. If this is so, however, Levi-Strauss would be on the right path but for the wrong reason. Instead of being indebted to Roman Jakobson, he should have learned his lesson from Lao Tzu to whom is credited the following saying:

When everyone recognizes beauty as
 beautiful, there is already ugliness;
 When everyone recognizes goodness as good,
 there is already evil.
 To be and not to be arise mutually;
 Difficult and easy are mutually realized;
 Long and short are mutually contrasted;
 High and low are mutually posited;...
 Before and after are in mutual sequence.
 (Watts, 1962b, p.135)

There is one other aspect of Levi-Strauss' approach which warrants mention. Actually this is not so much an aspect of his approach as it is a general attitude concerning the nature of reality which underlies his entire approach. For an example of this attitude we may quote from The Savage Mind:

I have suggested that since each totemic group makes itself responsible for the control of a species of plant or animal for the benefit of other groups, these specializations of function are similar to those assumed by occupational castes since the latter also practise a distinctive activity, indispensable to the life and well-being of the whole group. However, in the first place a caste of potters really make pots, a caste of launderers really wash clothes...while the magical powers of Australian totemic groups are of an imaginary kind. (p.122)

Another example of this general attitude was quoted previously on pages 153-154 of this thesis. For Levi-Strauss, as well as Spiro, Freud, Durkheim, Leach, and numerous other anthropologists, religion is a projective system. The gods are illusory. Religion is real only in a subjective sense whereas politics, kinship, economics, etc., are real in an objective sense. Religious efficacy is of an "imaginary kind". The origins of this bias are too intricate and numerous to permit any simple statement

here. In part this bias originated with the Greek distinction between knowledge and belief which was later inverted by the Christians. Knowledge is based upon evidence; belief is not. Western scientific knowledge tells the anthropologist that religious propositions are illusory because there is no scientific evidence in support of their validity. Thus according to our Western knowledge of nature, totemic groups do not actually control the totemic species; rather the aborigenes only believe they do.

The first objection to this sort of attitude is that it is unnecessary for our analysis. The anthropology of religion should be concerned with the investigation of religion and not with the testing of the validity of various religious propositions in terms of Western scientific knowledge. This is best left to the natural scientists.

The second objection is more serious and will be dealt with at some length both here and in the final section of the thesis. Levi-Strauss and the many other anthro-

pologists who also share this attitude concerning
 'objective reality' make the mistake of confusing
 reality for the human experience of reality. With
 regard to nature there is only one reality which we
 can come to know and that is apparent nature. It is
 through the human mind that 'objective reality' is per-
 ceived and organized, and the perception and organization
 of 'objective reality' is a subjective experience.
 For example, one does not hear sounds; rather the sounds
 are the hearing. One does not see a tree; rather the
 field of vision which includes a tree is the seeing.
 We may also propose that religion is no more or less
 subjectively or objectively real than is economics,
 politics, and kinship.

I shall return to this point in the final section with
 the aid of Alfred Whitehead, R.G. Collingwood, and
 Gordon Kayfman. For the time being, however, I shall
 content myself by bringing this point closer to home
 by quoting from a recently published book in the field
 of religious anthropology. The book entitled The Teachings
of Don Juan (1968) was written by Carlos Castaneda,

a graduate student in anthropology at the University of California. Don Juan is a yaqui shaman from Northern Mexico who in his old age decides that Carlos Castaneda is the person to whom he must impart the secrets of his learning before going off to die. During the course of several years Carlos is led through a series of experiences by don Juan in order that Carlos may become a 'man of knowledge'. Let us describe in detail one of the experiences which Carlos undergoes. Carlos is given by don Juan a root extract of devil's weed to drink as well as a paste composed of certain insect eggs, plants, and lard to apply to his legs and genitals. Carlos writes:

I followed his directions. The paste was cold, and had a particularly strong odor. When I had finished applying it I straightened up. The smell from the mixture entered my nostrils. It was suffocating me.... I tried to breathe through my mouth and tried to talk to don Juan, but I couldn't.

Don Juan kept staring at me. I took a step toward him. My legs were rubbery and long, extremely long. I took another step. My knee joints felt springy, like a vault pole; they shook and vibrated and contracted elastically. I moved forward. The motion of my body was slow and shaky; it was more like a tremor forward and up. I looked down and saw don Juan sitting below me,

way below me. The momentum carried me forward one more step, which was even more elastic and longer than the preceding one. And from there I soared. I remember coming down once; then I pushed up with both feet, sprang backward, and glided on my back. I saw the dark sky above me, and the clouds going by me. I jerked my body so I could look down. I saw the dark mass of mountains. My speed was extraordinary.... My head was the directional unit. If I kept it bent backward I made vertical circles. I changed directions by turning my head to see the side....

Following his flight the next incident which Carlos remembered was the feeling of waking about a half mile from don Juan's home. Getting his orientation from the landmarks, he realized that he had awoken by the site of don Juan's devil's weed plants. He began to return to don Juan's house when in the distance he saw don Juan approaching. Apparently don Juan had decided to fetch Carlos. He didn't know where Carlos had gone during his flight, but he knew that Carlos would come down near the place where the devil's weed grew which had been used for the particular potion which Carlos had drunk. After resting for several hours at don Juan's home, Carlos began to relate to don Juan his experiences

while flying. Carlos writes:

There was one question I wanted to ask him. I knew he was going to evade it, so I waited for him to mention the subject; I waited all day. Finally, before I left that evening, I had to ask him, "Did I really fly, don Juan?"

"That is what you told me. Didn't you?"

"I know don Juan. I mean, did my body fly? Did I take off like a bird?"

"You always ask me questions I cannot answer. You flew. That is what the second portion of the devil's weed is for.... A man flies with the help of the second portion of the devil's weed. That is all I can tell you. What you want to know makes no sense. Birds fly like birds and a man who has taken the devil's weed flies as such."

"As birds do?"

"No, he flies like a man who has taken the weed."

"Then I didn't really fly, don Juan. I flew in my imagination, in my mind alone. Where was my body?"

"In the bushes", he replied cuttingly, but immediately broke into laughter again. "The trouble with you is that you understand things in only one way. You don't think a man flies; and yet a brujo /a man of knowledge/ can move a thousand miles in one second to see what is going on.... So does he or doesn't he fly?"

"You see, don Juan, you and I are differently oriented. Suppose, for the sake of argument, one of my fellow students had been here with me when I took the devil's weed. Would he have been able to see me flying?"

"There you go again with your questions about what would happen if. It is useless to talk that way... Now if he /your friend/ has simply watched you, he might have seen you flying, or he might not. That depends on the man... you agree that birds fly because you have seen them flying. Flying is a common thing with birds. But you will not agree with other things birds do, because you have never seen birds doing them. If your friends knew about men flying with the devil's weed, then they would agree."

"Let's put it another way, don Juan. What I meant to say is that if I had tied myself to a rock with a heavy chain I would have flown just the same, because my body had nothing to do with the flying."

Don Juan looked at me incredulously. "If you tie yourself to a rock", he said, "I'm afraid you will have to fly holding the rock with its heavy chain."

(Castaneda, 1968, p.91, 93-94)

The only point which we can make here is that the mind is incredibly complex and that our knowledge of the mind and how the mind works is very limited. Most of our common sense notions about the mind, including the

idea that there is a mind as distinct from a body, have been shown by some psychologists and philosophers to be grossly wrong. Even the attempts to spatialize the mind into conscious and unconscious structures are now being criticized by psychologists. Until we know more about how the mind works and how human beings experience reality, facile comments and biases concerning the nature of 'objective reality', such as those offered by Levi-Strauss, Leach, and others, are of no scientific value and retrogressive for the development of religious anthropology.

PART III
TOWARD THE DEVELOPMENT
OF RELIGIOUS ANTHROPOLOGY

Weaving a finely integrated anthropological argument is no different from weaving a rug. To develop one's pattern of ideas out of one line of thought is impossible. Many strands must be handled all at the same time. In the final section of this thesis I shall pull together the more fruitful ideas advanced by contemporary anthropologists as well as weed from our garden those ideas which have been shown to be inaccurate or misconceived. This task, however, can only be accomplished by enlisting the aid of psychology, ethno-linguistics, philosophy, and theology. My debts along the way to Wilhelm Dilthey, Benjamin Whorf, Paul Tillich, Gordon Kaufman, ~~and~~ Alfred Whitehead, and R.G. Collingwood will be obvious. It would be best to begin quite simply and at the beginning.

The anthropological approach to religion is just that--- the anthropological approach to religion. The subject matter is not society, social relations, or culture; rather it is religion which we are trying to understand. Anthropology is our method. Our purpose then is to investigate religion by examining those aspects of religion

which are derived from the experience of human beings living together. It is only logical then that we require a definition of religion. Otherwise we could never come to recognize that to which we want to apply our method. Similarly other methods which apply themselves to religion, such as psychology, require a definition as well. Since the psychology of religion and the anthropology of religion are dealing with the same subject matter, it is again only logical that a definition of religion should be compatible for both disciplines even though their methods may differ radically.

Heretofore in the anthropological tradition there has existed only one self-critical attitude. This attitude stresses the development of theory in so far as theory can be supported by the facts. Far reaching theories of minimal verifiability are of less value than restricted theories which, because of their limited generality, are anchored solidly in empirical evidence. Of course, one assumes that the 'facts' have been honestly collected and presented without bias by the ethnographer. The facts, however, are never meaningless and undifferentiated,

for the very act of perceiving the facts and recording them already renders them differentiated and meaningful in terms of the ethnographer's experience and hence biased. We may restate this point crudely as follows: the anthropologist develops theory from the facts which develop out of the ethnographer's experience of reality. A second self-critical attitude at the epistemological level is therefore necessary.

A psychiatrist before being admitted to the profession is psychoanalyzed by another psychiatrist in order that he, the novice, may become somewhat more aware from an objective viewpoint of his own personality. Only with this knowledge is he permitted to analyze other personalities. Entrance into anthropology, however, is not quite so rigorous, and this is unfortunate, for the anthropologist, likewise, has a difficult task to do. With his baggage of home-grown assumptions and concepts, he travels to a remote corner of the world to investigate the life of a people who are completely foreign to him. His baggage, like all baggage on journeys, becomes a handicap in the end. There are, of course, the

expected problems of translating non-Western spiritual beings, forms of social organization, social roles, etc., into Western ones. More fundamentally, however, that which the anthropologist perceives is already distorted by Western linguistic categories. Accultural categories do not exist; therefore there is no escape from this epistemological dilemma. This is only natural. The psychiatrist after being psychoanalyzed is not expected to conform his total personality to some professional personality model. At best all he can do is become reasonably aware of himself and take this into account in his analyses of other personalities. Similarly this is all the anthropologist can do --- become reasonably aware of and sensitive to the inherent biases in his own experience of reality as well as the biases of his own intellectual heritage.

It is necessary to state this problem at the outset because the anthropological investigation of religion is perhaps the most difficult task of all. For example, when religion is defined in terms of the supernatural or the sacred we are dealing with categories which may

not exist for the people we are studying. And when we learn that Leach's primitives think structurally, and Tylor's primitives are home-spun philosophers, and Malinowski's primitives are pragmaticians, we are learning more about the intellectual heritage of the Western world than about primitive people. The anthropological approach to religion requires, therefore, a maximum degree of self-awareness toward one's own cultural and intellectual background. In other words, a journey to lands beyond the West would at this moment be inauspicious. Our investigation must begin in the West with a study of the anthropological and historical bases of anthropology.

If language only served as a mode of communication, there would be little problem here. But as Benjamin Whorf contends, language serves not only to communicate ideas but also to shape our ideas and our observations of the world. Whorf's view has been criticized for its extreme relativism and determinism, but on the whole his thesis seems valid. Let us take an example from a language with which we are familiar. In English there are very few words

which describe the quality of light. The few ^Sdescriptive words which do exist generally are variants of time, e.g., dusk, dawn, twilight, etc. The quality of light, however, differs not only with respect to time but also to space. Light in West End London is different from light in the Sahara desert which in turn is different from the light in the low countries of Europe. Indeed the peculiar quality of light in lowland Europe is one of the distinctive characteristics of the Flemish school of painting. Thus particularly perceptive individuals, such as artists, may be able to break through linguistic barriers. Or more properly they contribute to the extension and refinement of a language's sensitivity to the world in which we live. But it would seem that most people never question the way in which their language chops up and classifies reality. In addition to shaping the way in which we perceive nature, language also shapes the ideas which we wish to communicate. One can only think with words, and one's interpretation of the world and one's structuring of his own experience in the world can only be in terms of the language which one has at his disposal. For example, Hoijer writes of

the Navajo:

The Navajo speaks of 'actors' and 'goals' (the terms are inappropriate for the Navajo), not as performers of actions or as ones upon whom actions are performed, as in English, but as entities linked to actions already defined in part as pertaining especially to classes of beings. The form which is glossed you have lain down is better understood you (belong to, equal one of) a class of animate beings which has moved to rest....

This fashion of speaking, it seems to me, is wholly consistent with the dominant motif we saw in Navajo religious practices. Just as in his religious-curing activities the Navajo sees himself as adjusting to a universe that is given, so in his habits of speaking does he link individuals to actions and movements distinguished, not only as actions or movements, but as well in terms of the entities in action or movement. (1954, p. 102)

This statement is of the most profound significance not only for the study of religion but also for the study of the anthropological approach. There is more than irony in the fact that the concepts most used in the anthropology of religion as well as in other branches of anthropology have their origins in religion. Structure and content, knowledge and belief, thought

and action, nature and supernature are all linguistic categories derived from Greek philosophy and religion. Rudolf Bultmann makes this clear in his comparison of Greek and Hebrew religions:

The problem of the relation between form and matter, which so much exercised the Greek mind, is conspicuously absent from the Old Testament. Thus there is no conception of the 'cosmos', or of 'nature', or of the 'laws of nature'. The world is never objectified as a natural order whose eternal laws are open to intellectual apprehension. The Greek saw the divine power in the cosmic law whose existence he had apprehended by reason. In this way he brought the deity into relation with the universe. (1960, p.17)

and further on he writes:

...the Old Testament never speculates about the purpose of creation, or inquires into the rational intelligibility of the universe. It never thinks of each separate entity as articulated into a Whole, each part having its own purpose in an organic unity. (ibid., p.18)

Radcliffe-Brown in his later years was still searching for the 'natural laws of society' in his book, A Natural Science of Society (1957), and most contemporary anthropologists still define religion in terms of the supernatural. Greek philosophy and religion are still a very

real presence in the anthropological method. To a great extent this presence goes unquestioned. Of the contemporary anthropologists considered so far in this thesis only Nadel was remotely sensitive to the inherent biases of the Greek world view. Only Nadel fully rejected the category of the supernatural as the defining characteristic of religion.

It is interesting to note that the whole direction of Western philosophy in recent times has been away from phenomenology and towards epistemology. Above all philosophers have been questioning the validity of those Greek categories which are still existent in the sciences. Whitehead writes in his Concept of Nature:

...there are three components in our knowledge of nature, namely, fact, factors, and entities. Fact is the undifferentiated terminus of sense-awareness; factors are the termini of sense-awareness, differentiated as elements of fact; entities are factors in their function as the termini of thought. The entities thus spoken of are natural entities.

The history of the doctrine of matter has yet to be written. It is the history of the influence of Greek philosophy on science. That influence has issued in one long misconception of the metaphysical status of natural entities. The entity

has been separated from the factor which is the terminus of sense-awareness. It has become the sub-stratum for that factor, and the factor has been degraded into an attribute of the entity. In this way a distinction has been imported into nature which is in truth no distinction at all.... Thus what is mere procedure of the mind in the translation of sense-awareness into discursive knowledge has been transmuted into a fundamental character of nature. (1920, p.13, 16)

Levi-Strauss is not the only anthropologist who is still laboring under this misconception.

The point here, however, is not to go nitpicking but to suggest that our understanding of reality is more advanced than the Greek understanding of reality.

Hence there is not much sense in indiscriminately using Greek linguistic categories because these categories pertain to a less sensitive understanding of reality.

There is no way to avoid using linguistic categories in science, and undoubtedly many of the categories which we will employ in analysis and theory are derived from the Greek, but let us at least refrain from perpetuating concepts which no longer correspond to our level of knowledge. The two types of definitions of religion which

are predominantly used by anthropologists today are derived from Tylor and Durkheim. Religion is the belief in supernatural beings, and religion is beliefs and practices relative to 'sacred things'. Both of these definitions are born of Western experience, and both result in misconceptions when applied to the study of non-Western religions. For example, among the Ojibwa Indians of Wisconsin there is no distinction between natural and supernatural phenomena. Unlike the case of Western languages where 'person' is synonymous with 'human being', in the Ojibwa language 'person' may refer to both human and non-human beings. Persons are not anthropomorphically conceived according to outer appearance. The defining characteristic of a person is his 'vital part', or soul, and humans as well as the sun, bears, certain trees, and even particular rocks may possess a soul, and thus they are classified by the Ojibwa as persons. It would be inaccurate to say that the Ojibwa personify these non-human natural objects because such an interpretation implies that the sun, bears, and particular rocks and trees are initially perceived as inanimate objects. According to our Western class-

ification social relations exist only between human beings. For the Ojibwa social relations are possible between human and non-human beings. Hallowell relates an incident when an Ojibwa farmer ploughing his fields upturned a rather suspicious-looking rock. The farmer was not certain whether or not this rock was a person (and hence whether or not it could be moved out of the way) so he called in a tribal elder who was wise in these matters. The elder came and verbally addressed the rock. The rock did not respond in the way a person would, and, therefore, the rock was not a person.

(Hallowell, 1964) If the rock had been a person, Goffman could have easily analyzed this social situation in terms of the interaction between ego and alter.

Ego initiates the action and alter responds. Of course, as a foreign observer the ethnographer might maintain that this interaction was imaginary because we know that rocks are not persons. But this judgment is as unscientific as it is unnecessary. It is impossible for a human being to participate in the reality of another person. In social interaction the meaning of alter's response may be quite

different from ego's perception of the meaning of ~~alter~~'s response, and it is this latter aspect which is crucial for the continuance of social interaction. The ethnographer according to his Western experience may not observe any response by the rock, but if the Ojibwa can perceive that certain rocks can act in a socially stylized manner and if this perception is culturally supported (to distinguish it from insanity and non-ordinary reality) then there exists social interaction. To classify this social situation in terms of the interaction between human beings and supernatural beings completely misconstrues what is actually happening. The Ojibwa live in a social world inhabited by natural beings, not in a mystical world inhabited by supernaturals.

Definitions of religion in terms of the sacred seem of little use as well. Before it is possible to understand such a definition we need a further definition of what is sacred. Durkheim interpreted the sacred to mean the collectivity. Such an interpretation seems applicable only for tribal people with socially structured cosmol-

ogies. The sacred, so defined, has no referent for modern complex society. Leach attempts to improve upon Durkheim by situating the sacred and the profane on a continuum rather than making them, as Durkheim did, mutually exclusive categories. Leach defines sacred action as symbolic action, and the profane as technical action. But this again introduces a distinction which seems relevant only for the Western world. P'ang-yun, a Zen poet, once wrote:

Miraculous power and marvellous activity---
Drawing water and hewing wood.

The Zen Buddhist takes delight and finds freedom in everyday action: drawing water, hewing wood, preparing tea, raking leaves. This is technique pure and simple. There is no symbolic meaning attached to these activities yet these activities constitute the religious life of a devotee of Zen. Thus religious action is not a synonym for symbolic action. Indeed religious action may be both symbolic and technical, and we may presume that other types of action, such as political and economic, have symbolic as well as technical referents. Thus the distinction between religious and non-religious action cannot be in terms of symbolic and technical action.

Of all the anthropologists who define religion in terms of the sacred Nadel is the most ingenious. He juxtaposes sacred, not with profane, but with secular and vaguely suggests that secular action aims at normal effects whereas sacred action aims at miraculous effects. He then maintains that this distinction between sacred and secular may be found in all languages, and thus we are able to distinguish sacred from secular action by investigating the linguistic categories of a people. Ingenious as it is, Nadel's approach is ~~et~~ymologically confusing and epistemologically invalid.

In classical Greece sacred and profane were categories of place. Sacred life referred to the life inside the temple and profane life to the world outside the temple. Secular, however, was a time word meaning 'this present age' (in Latin, saeculum). Etymologically then sacred and secular are not congruent concepts. The difference between these two concepts is significant because these two words really point toward different world-views. Harvey Cox in The Secular City writes:

For the Greeks, the world was a place, a location. Happenings of interest could occur within the world, but nothing significant ever happened to the world. There was no such thing as world history. For the Hebrews, on the other hand, the world was essentially history, a series of events beginning with Creation and heading towards a consummation. Thus the Greeks perceived existence spatially; the Hebrews perceived it temporally. (1968, p.32)

Over the course of time secular came to mean this temporal world of change as opposed to the infinite and eternal life to be found within the mystical body of Christ. Profane came to mean contempt for the sacred. Still Nadel's ill-cho^osen use of sacred and secular blurs over these radical differences between the two concepts.

Epistemologically Nadel's distinction between the sacred and secular is inapplicable for non-Western people. If we are to take sacred and secular as referents of time, then the sacred life is the unchanging eternal life after death, and secular life is this worldly life of change. If we are to take sacred and secular as referents of place, then the sacred life is associated with heaven, God's kingdom on earth, or a sanctified

place of worship on earth, and the secular refers to this earthly life. No matter how we apply these words they always refer to mutually exclusive times, places, types of action, types of social roles, etc. This is not the case, however, with Zen and Tibetan Buddhism. Nirvāṇa (by which we shall mean the unchanging) and saṃsāra (by which we shall mean the changing) do not refer to mutually exclusive times, places, roles, or experiences. Saraha teaches in the Do-Ha-Mahāmudrā:

No difference existeth between the
Sangsāra and Nirvāṇa;
All manifestations and feelings are
identical with the essence of the mind.
There is no difference between the sea
and its waves.
No difference existeth between Buddhas
and other sentient beings.
(W.Y. Evans-Wentz, 1967, p.xxxvii)

Thus Nadel's view that the distinction between the sacred and the secular exists in all languages and that this distinction may be used to discriminate between religious and non-religious action is inaccurate. If we go back to his original suggestion that sacred action aims at miraculous effects and secular action aims at normal effects, we are still at a loss, for these

concepts rely upon a world-view whereby religion is set up as being something other than nature. This particular world-view, although a part of the Judeo-Christian tradition, does not at all seem applicable for religions such as Zen Buddhism, Taoism, and Vedanta which attempt to return man to his original nature. To return to the Zen poem previously quoted:

Miraculous power and marvellous activity---
Drawing water and hewing wood.

For the Zen Buddhist, drawing water and hewing wood is both miraculous and nothing special because he has returned to his original nature. There is no difference between religion and the natural flow of events. We may conclude then that the concepts of sacred and secular are oriented toward particular Western notions of time, space, and nature. Their applicability beyond the West is limited.

So far in this section we have been rejecting anthropological definitions on epistemological grounds. Before turning our attention to the construction of a universally valid definition let us weed from our garden those biases

which we have inherited from our intellectual ancestors. Theorists of religion have a tendency to split religion down the middle, discard one half, and assert that this other half in hand is the most important half or the real half. Religion is fundamentally social, or it is fundamentally personal. Religion is fundamentally intellectual, or it is fundamentally affective. Religion is to be examined normatively, or it is to be examined realistically, and so on. In the anthropology of religion Levi-Strauss advocates an intellectual approach; Radcliffe-Brown's descendants treat religion affectively. A few anthropologists, such as Turner, Spiro, and Horton, investigate both intellectual and affective aspects of religion, but, as we have seen, their interpretations of religion are colored by uncongenial aspects of Thomism, psychoanalytic theory, and rationalism. Most anthropologists explain religion in terms of social phenomena whereas psychologists explain religion in terms of personality dynamics. Cultural anthropologists such as Spiro tend to explain religion in terms of both cultural and psychological factors. Both psychologists and anthropologists believe their approaches are realistic leaving normative

approaches for theologians, philosophers, and idealists.

A full intellectual history of the anthropological approach to religion has yet to be written, and unfortunately it is beyond the scope of this thesis to do so. Such a history, however, would be particularly interesting because the anthropology of religion emerged during the nineteenth century more out of an attempt to resolve the great battle between faith and reason than out of a desire to understand primitive religion. Indeed the very word 'primitive' used to denote a particular type of people whose humanity was open to question could not have arisen in isolation. Rather the study of primitive people seemed at heart to be an attempt by Europeans to define what went into being 'civilized'. The positivist tradition postulated that religion was a stage midway toward the maturity of mankind. In the grand evolutionary scheme of world history religion would be supplanted by science. Rational man would replace religious man. Primitive peoples were thought to be living at the dawn of time in the stage of magic or at best religion. This positivist notion concerning

the evolutionary nature of magic, religion, and science has had dire consequences for the social sciences. In Purity and Danger (1966, p.7-28) Mary Douglas demonstrates a number of these misconceptions which are still existent in the anthropology of religion. Magical ritual is divorced from religious ritual and treated as a pseudo-science. Primitive hygiene and medicine are lumped in with magic, and so on. The distinction between science and religion has given birth to a number of misconceptions as well. There are still anthropologists such as Goody who insist upon the irrational nature of religion. Another important consequence of the evolutionist theory is the attitude that anthropologists can study religion impartially because, as rational men, they are no longer religious. The result of this general attitude is a rather erroneous view of religion from anthropological quarters.

What concerns us, though, for the time being is the assertion that religion is fundamentally a social phenomenon. This assertion confuses an approach for a definition. Theoretically this confusion originated with

Robertson Smith and Emile Durkheim. For Robertson Smith "religion did not exist for the saving of souls but for the preservation of society". (1889, p.29-30) Durkheim took this one step further by dividing human experience into two spheres --- the sacred and the profane --- and then postulating that the sacred and profane corresponded to collective and private experience respectively. Religion is society worshipping itself. This identification of religion with the collectivity is not entirely correct. Not all religions are oriented toward the socio-cultural realm, and, as Horton has shown, religious goals exist at all levels of structural reference. Certainly most religions are derived from and oriented towards the socio-cultural realm. It is because of this fact that anthropologists can legitimately investigate religion. It does not follow, however, that religion is the socio-cultural realm. Unfortunately Durkheim still carries the day. Another source of this confusion concerning religion and society, or if not a source at least a confirmation of the confusion as it was derived from Durkheim and Robertson Smith, lies with the types of

societies anthropologists have traditionally investigated. Nearly all of anthropological theory has developed from field work among tribal peoples. Not until more recent times have peasant societies and ancient civilizations received attention. Except for occasional kinship studies modern complex societies have yet to be investigated. Most of the literature in the anthropology of religion deals with tribal religions. Admittedly universal religions are localized. Christianity and Islam in black Africa acquire aspects of indigenous tribal religions. North Indian Buddhism impregnated Chinese Taoism. The offspring was Zen or Ch'an Buddhism. However, there are still differences between universal and tribal religions (as well as differences between universal religions in tribal society and universal religions in complex society) which haven't really been considered. Moreover, religions, such as Zen, Taoism, yoga, and Vedanta, which aim towards personal liberation have been completely ignored by anthropologists. The result of this neglect is that much of the theory in the anthropology of religion is applicable to tribal

society only and is utterly unable to cope with religion in modern complex society as well as religions of personal liberation. The task before us now is to develop a definition and approach to the study of religion that are capable of locating and explaining religion as it may be found and practised anywhere.

With regard to the normative and realistic approaches to religion it would be difficult to find an anthropologist today who would not subscribe to the belief that he is realistically studying religious behavior. Indeed it is this general attitude which causes anthropologists to investigate the caste system in Indian villages rather than the wandering Indian ascetics and yogas or to consider Japanese Buddhism at the village level and to neglect the devotees of Zen in the monastery a few miles away. The reasons generally offered to justify this attitude are twofold. First, an investigation of the religion of ascetics, yogas, and monks would embroil one in a hopeless tangle of philosophical ideas which would only lead one further astray from the genuine aim of anthropology --- the study of society. A second reason

offered implies that devotees of a religion are somehow not normal. Most people don't take religion that seriously, and the anthropologist is supposed to study most people, the average human being, and how he lives and interacts with other human beings. My criticism here is also twofold. First, even if one were to assume that anthropology was the study of society instead of, as the word implies, the study of man, such an attitude would still be misconceived because it associates society with social groups and leaves out entire areas of non-group social interaction such as friendship. The fact that the wandering Hindu ascetic is not an isolated phenomenon but a way of life which is socially and culturally constituted in India points toward the necessity of including such religiously oriented people within the scope of anthropology. Moreover, even if such a pattern of behavior were not socially constituted (as it is not, for example, in Great Britain) or even if the individual in his religious quest were to cut himself off completely from society because that individual is still thinking and hence using culturally constituted signs and symbols, he would still be a valid subject for

anthropological investigation. Second, if such genuinely religious people exist, why not study them even though this may necessitate rethinking our ideas about the nature of religion?

Paradoxically realistic analyses are often quite normative in their implications because they are derived from conscious rather than statistical models of social processes. This normative flavor becomes apparent to anyone who first reads the solemn anthropological texts on ritual and then goes out to the field to investigate ritual. While living in Nigeria I was invited by several Yoruba friends to attend their village's ~~the~~ el Kadir rituals. Not all of the villagers could be bothered to attend. Of those who came some seemed bored by the whole event (after all it was the same last year and the year before that and the year before...), others offered wisecracks, and quite a few were just kicking their heels waiting for the sacrificial goat to be roasted so they could eat their fill.

Another way in which realists are forced into a normative corner was already mentioned in the criticism of

Nadel's approach. By defining religion in terms of the sacred which we are to investigate via a people's linguistic categories, we would be forced in an analysis of religion in Great Britain to consider only Christianity. But this sort of analysis would be very unrealistic if it were not qualified by statistical evidence concerning what percentage of the people of Great Britain are members of the church, what percentage actually attend church on a regular basis, and so on. A statement to the effect that Christianity is the religion of Britain is actually a statement related to what religious behavior in Britain is supposed to be rather than what it actually is. Unfortunately statistical information of this nature is often lacking from anthropological monographs. In consequence those who are studying a particular people from books, and thus at two removes from the actual subject, are frequently the recipients of an inaccurate notion of what the religious behavior of the people is really like.

Having cleared the air somewhat, let us establish the difficulties of our task at hand. What we need is a def-

inition of religion so rigorous that it meets the criteria of a scientific definition. David Bidney writes:

...it may be pointed out that a real, or scientific definition is supposed to define the universal, or logical, essence of an object --- that in virtue of which a thing is what it is. A scientifically valid definition, as distinct from a purely conventional arbitrary one, is one that delimits the nature of an object as a whole and does not identify the properties which pertain to a part only with the object as a whole. A scientific definition is one that may be epistemologically verified in every instance of the object's presence and has ontological import as well, in the sense that it defines the essence or principle of being of its object so that, granted the actual presence of a given form or set of properties, the object in question is also present. (1953, p.340)

Having exhausted anthropological definitions of religion, it would be worthwhile to examine a definition of religion offered by a theologian. Paul Tillich has defined religion as man's ultimate concern. He writes that "faith is the state of being ultimately concerned; the dynamics of faith are the dynamics of man's ultimate concern". (1958, p.1) Religion places unconditional demands upon the individual with the promise of leading

the individual to ultimate fulfillment. The religious act is an act of one's total personality --- including both conscious and unconscious elements. What then is the nature of this ultimate concern? Tillich writes that "the ultimate concern is concern about what is experienced as ultimate". (ibid., p.5) At first glance this statement reads as a tautology, but the crucial word here is experience. Tillich does not concern himself, as the neo-Tylorians do, with descriptions and classifications of the ultimate. It is around human experience of the ultimate, not the nature of the ultimate, that his theory is based. Tillich writes in one of his most brilliant passages:

...everything which is a matter of unconditional concern is made into a god. If the nation is someone's ultimate concern, the name of the nation becomes a sacred name and the nation receives divine qualities which far surpass the being and functioning of the nation. The nation then stands for and symbolizes the true ultimate, but in an idolatrous way. Success as ultimate concern is not the natural desire of actualizing potentialities, but is a readiness to sacrifice all other values of life for the sake of a position of power and social prominence. The anxiety about not being a success is an idolatrous form of anxiety

about divine condemnation. Success is grace; lack of success, ultimate judgment. In this way concepts designating ordinary realities become idolatrous symbols of ultimate concern. (ibid., p.44)

Tillich's position as a Christian theologian commits him to assert the idolatry of any ultimate concern not linked with the Christian God. Whether or not God is man's true ultimate concern and the 'gods' of success and patriotism are false is a matter of concern for those in search of the 'true' religion. Since our purpose here is not to investigate the 'true' religion but religions in general, we may pass over Tillich's evaluations and concentrate entirely upon his theory. Also we shall substitute the word religion for faith (Tillich often uses these words interchangeably) because faith has associations which are not found in some Oriental religions.

We are left with a very remarkable definition of religion. Of all the definitions of religion considered so far in this thesis, Tillich's definition is the least culture-bound and the most valid epistemologically. It is oper-

ative for religion in simple as well as complex societies. By recognizing that man's ultimate concern is not necessarily toward the sacred or toward certain spiritual beings his definition is as valid for Western secular society as it is valid for the most deeply committed monks, yogas, and ascetics of the traditional religions. Tillich takes religion out of the evolutionary scheme and makes it relevant for humanity. By refraining from postulating a single source of the ultimate, Tillich's definition is applicable for both socially and personally constituted religions. By locating religion within the total personality, Tillich encompasses and goes beyond the bickerings of intellectualist, affective, and emotionalist theories of religion.

There are numerous critics of Tillich's theory. Many of these critics, like Spiro, do not understand Tillich's thesis, and thus their criticisms are misconceived. Spiro, it will be remembered, maintained that ultimate concern is not an adequate definition because for the mass of men religion is not a matter of ultimate concern. But indeed that is the very point which Tillich is putting

to us. For the mass of men religion as God is not a matter of ultimate concern, rather most people are oriented towards 'idolatrous' concerns, but because these idolatries are experienced as ultimate they also qualify as religions. In short, Jesus understood, as Spiro has not, the religious nature of the success ethic when he taught that man cannot serve both God and mammon. Other critics dislike Tillich's definition because it takes religion out of the realm of the sacred which, according to these critics, gives religion its special quality. Tillich's rejoinder would be that it is only by divesting religion of its sacred associations that we come to understand its real significance. He writes:

The content /of faith/ matters infinitely for the life of the believer, but it does not matter for the formal definition of faith. And this is the first step we have to take in order to understand the dynamics of faith.
(Ibid., p.4)

In tribal society with little role differentiation and with socially structured cosmologies, religious behavior is not very distinct (except in an analytical sense) from the mass of economic, political, and kinship behavior. Religion deeply pervades many aspects of tribal

life. In complex society, on the other hand, specifically sacred institutions and roles have been differentiated from the rest of these other activities, and this has contributed to the very narrow view in the Western world that religion is only to be understood in terms of those restricted activities which can be classified as 'sacred'. If one were to take church attendance as an indication of the relevance of the sacred for the contemporary Englishman, one would probably conclude that religion is becoming less and less important for our lives. Yet religious questions concerning the meaning of our existence are frequently a subject of both public and private debate. To solve this paradox we may conclude that religion either involves this question of meaning or that it involves one particular answer to this question --- the sacred. Tillich opts for the former alternative. In view of the difficulties we have already encountered with those anthropologists who define religion in terms of the sacred or in terms of spiritual beings, it might be fruitful for the time being to follow Tillich's lead.

There are, however, certain aspects of Tillich's theory which seem regrettable. He posits, as part of human nature, man's desire for the infinite. Man is a culturally and historically finite being. God, or 'true' ultimate concern, is, according to Tillich, an absolute being which transcends all relativity. We have, however, no evidence that human beings everywhere seek the infinite, and, logically speaking, it is doubtful that man, even if he does seek the infinite, could actually come to know the infinite as long as he continues to perceive and integrate his experience in terms of culturally and historically finite categories. Tillich to some extent recognizes this problem, for he states that man cannot directly express the ultimate; rather man's ultimate concern must be expressed symbolically.

But even symbols may not be of much use, or at least this is the Zen view. If one were to ask a Zen master, what is the nature of the ultimate which transcends all relativity, that person would most likely receive a swift kick in the shins --- the point being that any conceptualization whatsoever, by sign or symbol, only

takes us further away from the truth.

Let us now follow a line of approach already suggested in Tillich. Rather than classifying different objects of ultimate concern, we shall focus our attention upon the process by which man experiences the ultimate and the way in which this experience is structured. Such a line of approach is uncommon, but not entirely new, to anthropology. It underlies Mary Douglas' Purity and Danger (1966) and to some extent Godfrey Lienhardt's theory of ritual in Divinity and Experience (1961). We can tackle our problem in two complementary ways --- logically and genetically. Since it is easier to grasp this process genetically, we shall begin with this way. We need to ask how consciousness emerges in the human being and how this consciousness is integrated. A full discussion of this process, of course, is beyond the scope of this thesis and beyond my understanding of the subject. However, a summary of the contributions of Wilhelm Dilthey, R.G. Collingwood, and Gordon Kaufman to this subject is both feasible and directly related to our search for a definition of religion.

Dilthey suggests that cognitive thought develops out of the confrontation between human will and external limitation. Consciousness, at its most primitive level, emerges when certain innate drives of the living organism (to suckle, sleep, etc.) are resisted by external forces in the world. Awareness of resistance or unfulfillment causes the organism to become aware of its own bundle of drives. In this awareness of disunity in experience --- between his own spontaneous actions and the resistance to these actions by something other than him --- consciousness of both the world and self emerges. Indeed as Kaufman writes, "the very awareness of a distinction between motive and limitation means that thought itself, in the forms of memory and comparison, has begun to emerge; for here there is awareness that what actually occurs in the act does not really correspond with the original intention of the act".

(1960, p.31-32) Genetically speaking then we cannot come to know objective reality without similarly coming to know subjective reality, for knowledge of the external world develops only in so far as knowledge of the self

develops. Consciousness emerges then as a result of the interrelated awareness of subject and object. The fact that this polarity lies at the very basis of our consciousness brings us surprisingly close, but from a different and more sound perspective, to the position of Levi-Strauss.

Consciousness develops, therefore, as awareness of the subject and object become more and more differentiated. The subject is aware of external reality standing apart and to some extent against him, but the subject is also aware of the fact that to some extent he is part of objective reality or at least he is able to enter into relations with objective reality. The relevance of this point extends beyond the reaches of child psychology. Kaufman writes:

This analogical interpretation of the object in terms of the inner reality known to the subject is effective at every point. As Hume and Kant saw clearly, the thought of interconnectedness and relationship, which always underlies all of our ideas about the external world and is the most fundamental presupposition of our knowledge of it, could never arise simply from outer appearances which always stand either side by side or before and after each other. It must first be given within the perceiving self as a way of interpreting the outer that is encountered. Thus

our underlying conception of external reality as a structure of parts all related to one another in some way which we can come to know is an analogical interpretation of the object in terms of our inner experience as subjects centered in a unified~~ed~~ purposive system which unites past and future within the present. (ibid., p. 35)

Collingwood has shown as well in his Essay on Metaphysics (1940) how the notion of cause was transformed from the sphere of the willing self as agent to a mechanistic world-view and in his Idea of Nature (1945) how the Greek view of nature as an organic unity is based upon the attribution to nature of certain characteristics which the individual finds in himself. The point then is that all of our categories of knowledge are anthropomorphic in origin and based upon the analogy between subject and object. Analogical thought, contrary to Levi-Strauss (1966, p.263), is not solely restricted to savages. The efforts of the positivists to forge new categories based upon logic and objectivity are in vain, for our most fundamental categories which structure our experience are first built upon the human¹ experience of the self vis-a-vis the external world.

1. Mary Douglas in her criticism of Levy-Bruhl (Purity and Danger, p.77 et seq.) argues that the difference between primitive and modern world-views is that the primitive world is personal, undifferentiated, and subjective whereas the modern world is universal, differentiated, and objective. She writes that the criterion by which we may distinguish primitive from modern worlds is based on:

...the Kantian principle that thought can **only** advance by freeing itself from the shackles of its own subjective conditions. The first Copernican revolution, the discovery that man's subjective viewpoint made the sun seem to revolve around the earth, is continually renewed. In our own culture mathematics first and later logic, now history, now language, and now thought processes themselves and even knowledge of the self and of society are fields of knowledge progressively freed from the subjective limitations of the mind. (p.78)

If we are willing to grant, however, the validity of the theories of Wilhelm Dilthey and R.G. Collingwood, then Mary Douglas's thesis that knowledge at the objective pole frees itself from the subjective pole is erroneous. Consciousness of the objective world emerges only in so far as consciousness of the subjective world emerges, and vice versa. It may be a characteristic of primitive world views that objective reality is interpreted in terms of the subjective pole of experience, and it may also be true that much of modern Western thought has been an attempt to interpret the subjective world objectively, but this does not in any way imply that "knowledge is progressively freed from the subjective limitations of the mind". All that has happened is the subject has been made into an object and interpreted by objective categories which are still derived from

so far in this summary of the genetic origins of human consciousness, we have proceeded no further than a simple awareness of subjective and objective poles and the identification of a person's consciousness with the subjective pole. To continue, then, one of the earliest distinctions made at the object pole is between persons and things, and, following this, the identification of the individual at the subject pole as a person. This identity becomes possible because the subject senses physical similarities between himself and others, and also because this identity is encouraged by parents and relatives who treat their offspring as persons rather than things. Next there develops an awareness of the 'intrinsic' connection between certain inner feelings and certain physical expressions. Laughter connects with happiness, tears with sorrow,

subjective experience. This does not represent a step towards freedom from subjective limitations. The analogy between the subject and object has not been broken; rather it has simply been reversed. Contrary to Mary Douglas modern knowledge like primitive knowledge is anthropomorphic. This, however, is no cause for despair. If objective categories were not based somehow upon subjective experience, they would be meaningless, and hence we would have no way of understanding them.

frowns with anxiety, and so on. This awareness is acquired by means of the empathy which exists between a mother and her child. The mother smiles as she bounces the child in the cradle. The child smiles as well and comes to associate by analogy smiles with the corresponding inner feeling. This stage in the child's development marks the strengthening of his identity as a person, but more important, it is at this stage that the child becomes self-conscious vis-a-vis other people.

The development of self-conscious is significant because it means that the child has acquired the ability to communicate by conscious gesture and facial expression certain inner feelings, and thus the child is psychologically equipped to internalize a language. This is obviously a very important step in the growth of consciousness. To return to Kaufman:

Conscious language infinitely increases the varieties of external expression of internal states, so that communication is no longer dependent simply on the natural and spontaneous manifestations of inner ~~states~~ but has available a great system of artificial expressions which can also become spontaneous. We are thereby enabled

to distinguish and communicate with great subtlety and precision the different nuances of our feeling and thought, and thus, we come to a far more profound understanding of both ourselves and others than would be possible without the aid of language. (ibid., p.56-57)

Except at the very earliest stages of childhood consciousness develops hand in hand with the child's internalization of language. The differentiation of experience inherent in the categories of every language mediates the child's differentiation of experience. Accepting the validity of Whorf's thesis then the process by which the child acquires the ability to communicate meanings is identical with the process by which the child becomes aware of the meanings which he will communicate. Thus, in the words of Merleau Ponty, it is language which "presents or rather is the positioning of the subject in the world of meanings". (1961, p.225)

There are, of course, different modes of communication, and much communication proceeds non-verbally, but of all these different modes of communication language is

unique. To return to Merleau-Ponty:

Of all our means of expression, language alone is capable of referring back to itself, and language alone posits itself in an intersubjective structure of communication. La parole forgets itself, leads us to accept an idea of natural truth which it encloses, and gives birth, as we have seen, to the illusion of thought without words.... We can speak about words ...whereas the painter cannot paint about painting. This power of self-reference suggests a privilege of Reason, grounded in the fact that thought and objective language are simply two manifestations of the fundamental operation by which man projects himself towards the world. (1961, p.31)

In the act of communication the participants do not consciously relate the signifiers, which they are using, to that which is signified. As I write this I am smoking a cigarette. anyone reading this fully understands my action. Nobody would stop to say that my statement was ridiculous because cigarette is a concept, and it is impossible to smoke a concept. La parole forgets itself, and we take for granted the world of meanings in which we are positioned by a language. on the other hand, as Merleau-Ponty and others have pointed out, it is in the nature of language that a language can refer back

to itself. We can consciously discuss paroles; moreover we can ponder situations not immediately present for us. The relevance of this aspect of language for our present task is twofold. First, since language may also be a conscious activity, the relationship between signifiers and that which they signify may be examined. This makes possible the standardization of meanings within a society. Meanings may be exchanged and compared. Furthermore according to Talcott Parsons, it is through this exchange of meanings that knowledge and ultimately philosophy develop within the community. Second, language enables man to consider situations not immediately present to him, and thus it is through language that man comes to pose questions concerning his origins and destiny, the nature of death, and the meaning of his existence.

So far this summary of the development of human consciousness has been purely descriptive. We need to ask what is the dynamic within this process which causes consciousness to evolve, to differentiate at

the subject and object poles, and to integrate experience? Of all the types of theories which address themselves to this question Kaufman's theory seems the best because he locates the dynamic within the thought process itself. Psychological theories tend to explain this process in terms of drive theory or personality dynamics.² Drive theories, however, only label the process rather than explain it. To postulate a self-actualizing drive doesn't really further our understanding of this process. Personality dynamics provide relevant explanations as to why particular individuals, such as philosophers, artists, and intellectuals, strive to differentiate experience. They do not, however, provide explanations of why this process occurs universally and especially among people whose personalities are less autonomous than artists, philosophers, and intellectuals.

Let us return then to Kaufman. Kaufman assumes that validity is a universal norm of all conscious activity.

2. see John Butler and Laura Rice, "Adience, Self-actualization, and Drive Theory" in Concepts of Personality, Wepman and Heine (eds.), Methuen, London, 1964.

His assumption seems reasonable, for he maintains that the criteria of validity are culturally constituted. He does not postulate, for example, that logic, the Western criterion of validity, is in any way the universal criterion of validity, for universal criteria do not exist. The only mark of validity is its adequacy to integrate and interpret human experience. Conscious activity which adequately relates experience is valid, and for Kaufman there are three reasons why conscious thought strives for adequacy. Let us take each of these reasons in turn.

First, Kaufman, borrowing from Dilthey, delineates different levels of consciousness. The very lowest level is what Dilthey called Erlebnis. At this lowest level all that exists is a very primitive sense awareness. The next higher level occurs when the person becomes aware of subject and object poles of experience. The stage of self-consciousness represents an even higher level. Finally thought and knowledge, which is possible only after the internalization of language, occurs at the highest levels of consciousness. Kaufman writes:

...since each level is an emergent form, and not a reproduction of the previous level, and since an Erlebnis in all its full-bodied character is never 'known' (it is erlebt), in certain respects the experience which is the ultimate referent for knowledge transcends that knowledge, as something beyond the reach of thought. In this transcendence lies one of the roots of the idea of validity with its normative tension. The tension of normativeness or obligation derives from the awareness that the given (Erlebnis) transcends every level of consciousness emerging from it and referring back to it. This tension forces us to attend to the question of the adequacy with which each succeeding level of consciousness grasps and represents the previous one. ...it is essential, if there is to be thought at all, that the higher levels adequately represent the lower....
(1960, p.70-71)

A second source of the tension for adequacy resides with the communal nature of human experience. The comparison of meanings within the community then constitutes a source of normative tension. Meanings are refined and standardized within the community thereby giving rise to a 'common knowledge'. Interpretations of personal experience can be checked and verified against the common knowledge of the community. Within the community, therefore, thought strives for universality.

The extent to which certain knowledge is universal will depend, of course, upon the boundaries of the community.

The third source of tension lies with the logically interconnected nature of thought. At the center of the structure of human consciousness is the self. It is around the self as an 'enduring thing' that all aspects of one's present consciousness, including memories of past experience and anticipations of future experiences are integrated. To quote from Kaufman:

All of the processes of thought, e.g., comparison, unification, separation, analysis, etc., stem from this living unity into which consciousness brings the manifold of Erlebnisse. These activities are already occurring at the lowest levels of consciousness, enabling us to distinguish in perception that there are, for example, differences in quality of color and tone and pleasure, though we do not consciously think these differences. From these activities, eventually emerge the higher processes of 'thought' and 'judgment', which involve conscious comparison, subsumption under categories, and the like. (ibid., p.78)

One is never able to unify completely one's experience since human experience is never completely unified from the moment of an awareness of the duality of subject and object. Thus the tension toward unity is always

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present. In sum, then, the tension to differentiate and integrate experience with greater and greater degrees of adequacy is part of the nature of thought itself. Without these normative conditions thought would have no existence at all.

We are now in a position to establish a relationship between meaning, thought, and experience. As Kaufman has shown, thinking is a structural activity which strives to unify experience:

Everything we know is in a context of relationships to everything else in such a way that it can be said to 'mean' something. Meaning is the category in terms of which all of experience is brought into a coherent whole. (ibid., p.105)

Experiences which do not relate at all to one's own structure of experience are classified as meaningless.

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3. According to Dr. Suzuki, Alan Watts, and other interpreters of Zen Buddhism to the West, the Zen experience of satori is characterized by the transcending of this subject/object duality. In light of this we may qualify Kaufman's theory concerning the normative tension for adequacy. Indeed perhaps we could redefine the experience of satori as the attainment of adequacy. This qualification, however, in no way challenges the validity of Kaufman's thesis. In fact, his thesis enables us to view the process whereby a devotee of Zen attains satori within a Western framework. Thus we can see that one experiences satori by driving further and further down through all levels of consciousness until one arrives at Erlebnis which transcends subject/object duality.

The meaningfulness of each new experience is because that experience fits into one's own ongoing structure of meaning. Of course, most of one's everyday experiences never rise above the pre-conscious level of awareness. One is not always conscious of the motor traffic outside or the ticking of clocks, for example. One becomes aware of these pre-conscious experiences only when one pauses and consciously names them. Moreover, it is doubtful that such experiences as these would be considered by anyone to be of a significant nature. In other words, one's experiences are far too numerous to be dealt with in the same way. Many experiences never rise above the pre-conscious level of awareness. Others we are conscious of momentarily, but they are subsequently forgotten. Some experiences, however, are selected from the total range of one's experience and are invested with significance. In other words, they are considered 'meaningful', and it is around these 'meaningful' experiences that the totality of one's experience is structured. What particular experiences are selected as being significant for one's life is a factor of psychological, historical, social, and cultural considerations. One's personality,

one's linguistic categories, which social roles and social events are invested with meaning, certain historical events such as the resurrection of Jesus Christ, or the proletariat revolution and the end of the class struggle are all possible factors in this complex and ongoing selection process .

This process is never complete not only because consciousness is an ongoing activity of the mind but also because we are continually provided with new experiences which test the adequacy of one's meaning structure. Such tests on occasion may cause one's consciousness to reinterpret itself in a more adequate way. An excellent example of this process of reinterpretation is the case of Job. We know that the self is a unifying activity of the mind, and thus intimately a part of one's meaning structure. Furthermore we know that one's notion of selfhood, or identity, is for the most part culturally and socially supported. A bowler hat, umbrella, attache case, and a dark suit; or long hair, sandals, LSD, and a mattress on the floor; or a red sports car, dark glasses, tanned skin, and a whisky

sour are all ways of telling us who we are. Job thought himself to be a just and righteous man. His identity was confirmed by a faithful wife and beautiful children. He was prosperous, and his family was in good health. His ~~from~~ ^{life} was productive, and other members of the community respected him. All of these cultural objects not only defined his identity as a righteous man but also were the source of his meaning. When each of these cultural supports were taken away, he plunged into despair. His structure of meaning had been shattered. Afflicted by boils, his world in ashes and ruin, he cried out "What is my strength that I should hope, and what is my end that I should prolong my life?" (Job 6:11) His sin was that his identity and his world which mirrored that identity were his source of meaning rather than the Almighty God Yahweh.

Admittedly in the case of Job somewhat unusual but not unprecedented historical circumstances challenged the meaning of his existence, but the process by which he strived for adequacy is not at all unique. We can also

observe this process in situations of social change. It is a general characteristic of tribal religions that their cosmologies are socially structured. If the existence of a tribe is threatened by another people and their gods are rendered powerless, we may expect a crisis in meaning among the conquered people. This crisis could resolve itself in a number of ways. The conquered may adopt the religion of the conquerors. Another possibility is that the conquered form a nativist movement in an attempt to retain or regain the old traditional life of the tribe. A third possibility is that the conquered forge a more universally adequate meaning system with other subject neighbors. Millennial cults are of this type. Traditional religion of the Plains Indians of United States was tribal. When the Plains Indians' hunting grounds and indeed their very existence were threatened by the white settlers and the United States Government, tribal religion broke down, and the Ghost-Dance religion emerged. This new millennial religion supplanted the individual tribal religions and was universal for all Indians. The popularity of the Ghost-Dance religion was due to the fact that it was more able to

integrate meaningfully the new experiences of the Plains Indians and that it was able to do this more adequately than the traditional tribal religions.

We are now in a position to conclude that meaning is not only a basic need but also a fact of human existence, and it is upon this fact that the anthropological approach to religion must be based. Moreover, we have reached the point whereby we can define religion. As our definition of religion I would propose that religion is an adequate meaning structure of human experience.

It remains for us to test the validity of this definition. Keeping in mind David Bidney's three criteria of a scientific definition, we must now determine whether or not this definition meets these criteria: universality, epistemological verifiability, and ontological import. Heretofore the problem with definitions of religion which have been offered by anthropologists is that, for the most part, they have been derived from field experience in tribal society. These definitions are applicable neither for religions of liberation nor for religion in a complex society. By locating our definition within

the experience of being human rather than in a particular type of activity or in a particular class of beliefs or in a particular realm of society or culture, we are able to locate religion as it occurs anywhere. By directing our efforts toward the question of meaning and by not positing a priori a single source of meaning, we do not fall victims of psychological or sociological reductionsim. Meaning may flow from historical events, inner experiences, as well as from the socio-cultural realm. As Tillich has observed, meaning is not the sole province of that remote corner of society commonly called 'religion'. The possibilities of meaning are as wide as the possibilities of human experience. Our definition, by keeping us open to all of these possibilities, satisfies the first criterion of universality.

Second, we know that all men structure their experience meaningfully and that this structure is a necessary condition of thought. Assuming that thinking is a universal activity of man, then our definition is also universal. Our only category is meaning. As Jacques Lacan has written,

"no meaning is sustained by anything other than a reference to another meaning". (1966, p.116) In other words we cannot define meaning, for it has no content in and out itself. Meaning simply refers to the relational character of our knowledge. The actual content of meaning varies from religion to religion. Our definition derives not from what men have come to know of reality not from a particular way of thinking common to people from the same cultural background. Rather our definition derives from the nature of the knowing process itself, and thus we are able to pass over the second hurdle of epistemological validity.

We must now determine whether or **not** our definition has ontological import. Knowledge consists, as Kaufman has shown, in the "successful relating of parts of our experience to the whole of our experience in such a way that the parts have 'meaningful' places in the whole, i.e., stand in significant relationship with the rest of experience". (1960, p.104) But thinking at the highest levels of consciousness is derived from lower levels of consciousness and ultimately from what Dilthey called

Erlebnis. Erlebnis cannot be grasped by thought because it is that vast and undifferentiated experience which underlies both logically and genetically the emergence of consciousness. Yet for thinking to have any reality, it must continually refer back to Erlebnis. Definitions of God as 'being' or 'pure being', such as proposed by Aquinas, Tillich, and Turner, have never been especially helpful because of their ambiguity. Being has no referent to our own experience by which we may come to know it --- let alone entertain even a vague idea about what it might be. And to postulate the infinite and absolute nature of being, makes matters only worse, for as we have learned from Dilthey and Kaufman, as long as man retains his finite categories of thought, he cannot grasp being. Moreover, by implying that being is something other than man, there is no reason for us to accept the existence of being except by an act of faith. If we were to locate being within human experience, however, it would lose its ambiguity as a concept. We may suggest then that being as discussed by Turner, Tillich, et al corresponds to Erlebnis as dis-

cussed by Dilthey, Kaufman, et al. Erlebnis can never be known. It is the "ultimate referent for knowledge" but "transcends that knowledge, as something beyond the reach of thought". (Kaufman, 1960, p. 70-71) Our definition places being at the level of Erlebnis and thus contains ontological import as well.

We began the final section of this thesis with an appeal to rid the anthropological approach to the study of religion of those epistemological and intellectual biases which had caused us to turn religion into something other than itself. I believe we have come a long way toward approaching that goal given our level of knowledge. This does not mean, however, that our task has been in any way simplified because religion is not a simple subject to investigate. The one major consequence of our definition is that we must now include within that category commonly known as religion various secular meaning structures, e.g., romantic love, success, nationalism, political ideologies, rationalism. Our task of locating the religion(s) of a people cannot be very straightforward. We have no clear-cut method

as the neo-Tylorians do, to differentiate religious from non-religious action. And even after we have differentiated religious action from non-religious action our task is still complex because among a people there may be any number of religions. Perhaps for a tribal people living in a small-scale society with a high level of social and cultural integration and with minimal communication with the outside world we may suppose there would only be one religion. Certainly, however, this is not the case with complex societies and those simple societies which, as a result of historical circumstance, have been exposed to the missionary and commercial activities of Western civilization. Among societies such as these we may expect a variety of religions. This diversity of religious orientation could be made explicit either between individuals within the social system or within the consciousness of the individual himself. For example, Tillich's American businessman in pursuit of success may still go to church every Sunday. It would be gratuitous to label this hypothetical businessman a hypocrite. Different meaning structures may be invoked

in different situations. For example, the Christian businessman may integrate an incident of death within the family in terms of Christian doctrine whereas he may integrate the situation of a less highly salaried nextdoor neighbor in terms of his success ethic. Carried to their logical conclusions success and Christianity are contradictory, but, assuming man to be problem-oriented, then most Christian businessmen would not in normal circumstances be sensitive to this contradiction.

Our final task then is to suggest various ways by which anthropologists can locate religion. I do not think that it would be of any use to rigidify a particular line of approach into the approach. Our purpose is to investigate religion, and our method should be flexible enough to adapt easily to different religious contexts and open enough to recognize the validity of other approaches. Let us then go back over the entire thesis and briefly list the more fruitful lines of approach by which we may come to locate and explain religion.

1. Autobiography represents an attempt by the individual to integrate his experience meaningfully. So far anthropologists have made little use, if any, of autobiographies even though this seems an ideal way of discerning the relationship between meaning and experience.

2. The relevance of ethno-linguistics for anthropology of religion was suggested in the work of Hoijer among the Navajo and underlies the contributions of Benjamin Whorf, Gordon Kaufman, Jacques Lacan, and Merleau-Ponty. Language positions the individual in a world of meanings. By studying the semantic structure of a language we may come to know relationships between thought, meaning, and experience among a people.

3. As Hallowell has demonstrated in Culture and Experience (1955) concepts of selfhood vary from society to society and thus is a culturally identifiable variable. The importance of the self for religion cannot be overstated, for the self is the unifying activity around which the consciousness is structured. In the investigation of the religion(s) of a people we need to ask whether human beings are also endowed

with selfhood, whether or not the self can detach itself from the body, to what extent is the self an agent in action, what are the components of selfhood and what happens to these after death, what is the relationship between self and destiny, etc.

4. We can also approach religion by investigating the cultural identity models of a people. These models provide the person with a self-image around which he projects his identity to the world and interprets his own existence meaningfully. In all societies certain identity models are particularly invested with meaning and their corresponding social roles are thought of as being significant. Certainly capitalism in the Western world could not have developed to its present proportions without the model of businessman being invested with meaning. By learning which social roles (e.g., entrepreneur, priest, tribal elder, warrior, lover, proletarian workers, etc.) are invested with a high degree of meaning, we may come to locate the various religion(s) of a people. We have also seen in the case of Job the way in which we can analyze

religious change in terms of the successive identities through which an individual passes during the course of his life. An example of this kind of approach may be found as well in The Secular City (1968) by Harvey Cox. The particular identity models which he discusses are the playboy and Miss America. (p.202-226)

5. Turner opens us to the possibility that tribal religions may be as metaphysically subtle and adequate as the universal religions of great civilizations. His approach centers upon ritual symbols and ritual action. By analyzing the symbolic, ideological, telic, and role structures of ritual action we are able to perceive the relationships between meaning and experience among a people.

6. "Any culture is a series of related structures which comprise social forms, values, cosmology, the whole of knowledge and through which experience is mediated". (Mary Douglas, 1966, p.128) Following Mary Douglas we need to ask how experience is structured through ritual? How are threats to this structure of experience dealt with by society? What is the source of

power in the cosmos and how this power is linked with the social structure, and so on.

Each of these various approaches comes within the boundaries of anthropology, and each is directed to the understanding of religion. By combining the various perspectives we may come to know more fully the nature of religion. However, it is doubtful that we could ever achieve a completely unified analysis of a religion. This is no reason for despair, though. We can see from our definition of religion that religion itself is never a completely unified system. Rather religions (with the possible exception of certain oriental religions of personal liberation) are continually under tension to attain greater and greater adequacy in relating human experience into a meaningful whole. Any claim from anthropology to have constructed a perfectly systematized model of religion would not only be pretentious but would also be a distortion of the real nature of religion. Our subject defines the limits of our approach. In religion as in anthropology

one can only strive for greater and greater adequacy in understanding and then communicate that understanding to one's fellows.

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